**Ross Dowson archives – correspondence – Year 1949**

General correspondence incl. Montreal & Windsor, ON

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| 01_31 | Letter to Dear Comrades, Montreal, re: sending the branch a report from B.C. on the IWA convention (Woodworkers') |
| 03_02 | Letter to the Montreal Branch (RWP), re: congratulations on publishing the first issue of *La Vérité* |
| 03_02B | Letter to Murray Dowson and Jean-Marie Bédard, re: our policy in regard to the Carr case, the ''spy scare, the anti-soviet war drive'' |
| 03_03 | Letter to the Windsor comrades, re: the British entry into the BLP; shipping the FI Manifesto to New York; local meeting contacts, the crisis of the LPP and Stalinism worldwide |
| 03_18 | Letter to Morris Stein, SWP, New York, re: confirming that the Vancouver Branch is suspending two IWA unionist activists; complete agreement with SWP attempts to assist; the long history of dealing with these ex-comrades; the RWP international donation |
| 03_24 | Letter to Ruth Benson (SWP, New York?), re: production of the last issue of LC; Rose's despicable behaviour in Toronto; the loss of Lloyd and Tom in Vancouver; planning a meeting on the CCF |
| 03_29 | Letter to the Montreal Branch, re: crisis in relations with the XX (IWA) leadership (and J-M Bédard); the importance of the IWA to us; the importance of J-M B. remaining in Montreal |
| 04_25 | Letter to Ruth (Benson, SWP, New York), re: a sudden demand from BC for full coverage of the CCF convention; Montreal report |
| 05_13 | Letter to Don (D.), Windsor, re: the role of the German Social-Democrats in 1933; tricky relationships with types like Archer; UAW PAC decides to run against the CCF |
| 05_17 | Letter to Murray Dowson & Jan-Marie Bédard, re: publishing the *La Vérité* manifesto; correcting Vancouver articles on the CCF convention; the Asbestos strike coverage |
| 05_17B | Letter to Hugh Dowson, Windsor, re: sub drive results and *LC* distributions; getting his story straight for U.S. Immigration; the Stalinists' UAW-PAC maneuver |

06_15 Letter to Murray Dowson & Jean-Marie Bédard, re: notarized letters for a French comrade to be arranged; on the question of a dubious coalition of left forces in Quebec; the dubious future of the CCF in Quebec

06_21 Letter to Jean-Marie and Murray, re: need an immediate yea or nay on a vital question, Rose opposed, Reg in favour; wire answer

06_00 ***RWP Internal Bulletin documents: Some remarks on critical support, by Paul Kane & Organizational problems confronting the RWP, by R.D.;***
***1)*** RWP must adopt policy of critical support for CCF in all ridings; the argument against support for the Stalinists; CCF represents mass independent working class political action;
***2)*** The RWP in 2-1/2 years has consolidated; need for a ‘’campaign spirit in the party;’’ The RWP although well placed in unions remains isolated in mainstream labor politics, i.e, the CCF; we need serious educational work, LC is not seen as a main party organizer; our growth must recruit sectors from the CCF and LPP

07_20 Letter to Don (D.), Windsor, re: his accident; recommend reading SWP course on Marxist economics; our need for serious study

08_08 Letter to Jean-Marie Bédard, Montreal, re: his ideas on entry of Vancouver branch into the CCF, need collaboration on Quebec articles for *Labor Challenge*

09_01 Letter to J-M Bédard, re: books and book accounts; IS-SWP correspondence on the USSR (defence or not); Montreal discussions with M--; Stalinist withdrawal from the TLC

09_26 Letter to the Windsor comrades, re: prospects of getting into the local CCF; the CCL convention

09_27 Letter to Jean-Marie Bédard, Montreal, re: *LC* needs a translation of the FI statement on Yugoslavia

10_07 Letter to J-M Bédard, re: No coverage of him in the Ontario Stalinist press; miscellaneous Montreal developments

10_08 Letter to Ruth (Benson), New York, re: shipments of literature from the SWP; journal layout policy banter; RD favours B.C. CCF entry

10_15 Letter to Murray (Dowson), Montreal, re: the tram fare increase issue; on the question of CCF entry in B.C.; Joe Rose’s opposition to all CCF work in Toronto; Rose’s trade union-party attitude

10_19 Letter to Windsor comrades, re: latest *LC* excellent for work on Stalinists

10_22 Letter to Don (D.), Windsor, re: the local Branch situation with him and Hugh (D.); books; serious personal conflicts

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| 10_23 | Letter to J-M Bédard, Montreal, re: public meetings in Montreal; a note on planned activities of WEL |
| 10_99 | *(Undated fragment to J-M Bédard?)* re: Montreal WEL meeting a fiasco (RD relates positive side); a review of Gagnon group |
| 10_98 | *(Undated letter in October)*, to Comrade Genora (SWP, Detroit), re: sharp personal problems in the Windsor branch that she might mediate |
| 11_15 | Letter to Herb H., re: thank you for the donation and sustenance in a period of fundamental world changes |
| 11_15B | Letter to Windsor comrades, re: receipts, donations and sub-work; contacting Yugoslavs; need for articles for *LC* |
| 11_30 | Letter to Murray (Dowson), Montreal, re: on the CCF entry issue; Joe Rose's principled opposition to entry in Toronto; election work and the CCF; debate on the issue of Stalinist unions |

Jan 31 1948

Montreal;

Grenier - Jean-Marie Bédard
Hon Sutherland
Reg Bullock (vans)

Dear Comrades;

Just a note to take up a few of the questions raised in the last two letters from Grenier;

Really pleased to hear about the arrival of new strength and the very fine plans you are laying for the building of the branch. I am sure that Ken after his stay here and his work with a really functioning branch will be in a much better position to effectively participate in the branch work and that we will be making new gains in a very short time.

You ask for a report of the IWA convention; Well of course we know nothing from Tom and Lloyd but Reg has written up an extensive report. Athough it is in many ways not a very rounded one it will give you a picture of proceedings. It is of course for the information of N.C. members only as it contains odds and ends XX. Would you return it just as soon as you have gone over it.

Which reminds me I sent a letter on recent developments out there and would like very much to have your opinions.

Re books. In my opinion we should not keep a real stock of books there but should ship them all back here let us straighten up the accounts and then keep what would amount to a sample case from which you could take orders and have us mail them into the person who purchases. The sample case would have to contain one copy of everything( incidently there are some pamphlets that you do not have down there.)

I want to send out a financial report within the next few days. How about sending me some funds so we can take Montreal, with Two N.C. members out of the zero bracket.

More later

comradely

Ross

March 2, 1949

The Montreal Branch

Dear Comrades:

We have just received the first issue of La Vérité.

On behalf of the entire party I want to send you our congratulations.

An excellent peice of work. Politically we have such a complete and common understanding that nothing need be said. Technically it leaves little to be desired.

It is good to see the Canadian section raise that old battle cry Workers of the World Unite in the language of the French Canadian proleteriat.

La Vérité has an auspicious beginning coming out as it does when the organized labor movement in Quebec is consolidating its ranks under the whip lash of Duplessis and Canadian campitalism is attempting to destroy the traditional anti-war sentiments of the Quebec masses in its preparations for the Third Imperialist World War.

La Vérité and le Parti Ouvrière Révolutionnaire will be the rallying point for the forces that are destined to usher in the Canadian revolution.

Long live the Fourth International

Long live La Vérité

with revolutionary communist greetings

Ross Dowson

MONTREAL BRANCH

March 2, 1949

March 2, 1949

Dawson - Marie Bédard

Dear Murray and Jean;

Have just received the first issue. Think it is excellent. This is a terrific Montreal Branch step forward [redacted]. I am enclosing with this letter a short letter to the branch which I think would be a good thing to read at the next meeting.

Would you send me some more copies....10 more. I want to send each of the branches and members at large a copy. I would send you the addresses [redacted] so you would have them for each and every issue but I do not believe that many of the comrades can read even a word of French. I want to send them all a copy of the first issue...it will be a real shot in the arm. I will enclose a note asking them if they want it regularly and how many. What do you charge for a sub?

I do not recall whether I told you Jean waht the dead line was for the next issue of Labor Challenge. We would like the Montreal copy into the office by this coming Monday morning. If Murray or Ken are not immediately available would you phone them and let them know. We are holding open 4 and a half pages of copy. Sorry that I did not let you know sooner.

Re the discussion that we had about the Carr case and my letter. I am in agreement with the manner in which we have handled it however I think that [redacted] it necessary that we make sure that this information reach the public even though there may have been no substitution in the Babich passport duplicate.

Unfortunately Jean and I did not have [redacted] much time for discussuon of this question. [redacted] Is it possible that you are convinced that it would be a political error on our part [redacted] to have the party identified with such a revelation. [redacted] Are you afraid that we would be identified by the workers as supporting the spy trial itself? If so I think you are mistaken. I do not feel that our party in this case can be identified with the spy scare by raising this question any more than Kortsky could be identified with the aims and objectives of the Dies Committee by appearing before it. After all this is a matter of murder. The workers including the Stalinist workers have no sympathy for those who would murder their opponents.

I am of the opinion that we should make a release to the press...stating our attitude towards the spy scare, the anti-soviet war drive etc then raising these questions. I would like your opinion just as soon as possible. I have heard no word from the other N.C. members. I sent them a copy of the letter telling them that it was going onto you and if you approved it would be sent to the crown attorney. If we are going to act then of course we must do so in the next week or so.

Would you giveme your opinion on this press release idea.

comradely

Ross

March 3, 1949

Windsor

Dear Comrades;

Thanks very much for the copies of the XXX Auto Union Builder. Will you send us the same number of copies of every issue. We have forwarded them to the various comrades and branches involved in trade union work. We consider that it will be a good guide for the comrades in their trade union work.

I am also enclosing the receipts for the last two months sustaining pledges.

I am glad to know that you manged to meet with Jacques and Sylvia. They stayed here only for three days, saw the town, met most of the comrades, and were able to take in one of the forums. I suppose Sylvia gave you the latest on the British Party. There is a document coming out on the Haston entry proposal published by the IS. In actuality the majority's decision to enter the Labor Party is not as favourable as it may appear. When you receive a copy of their statement you will find that it is permeated with defeatism and is liquidationist.....ending up for the turn of the whole international regardless of local situations into the social democracy...all but Ceylon. I hear that the SWP is going to put the material out in a bulletin shortly.

I am sorry to hear that they are over. I was hoping that Sylvia would not be able to make it ....we could really use her in Montreal. There have been some excellent developments take place in Montreal recently. In a day or so you will be receiving a copy of La Verite, our French language paper. It is an excellent job and is a terrific achievement for us....now we can approach the French Canadian workers and really begin to play a role in Quebec. When you receive your copy I think it would be a good idea for one of you to sit down and send a letter of congratulations in the name of Windsor.

I think you must have misunderstood my enquiries about the possibility of shipping the manifesto via Windsor. The big shipment has not been cleared yet by the U.S. authorities. I am sure that you could not get them through openly .XXXXX....at least any quantity of them. I was suggesting that you take some over each trip, you could carry about 25 in your overcoat pockets. However I think we are going to manage alright by working other channles. We sent a parcel of thirty to N.Y. the other day (they were only worth 4.50 and you need no foreign exchange application if they are worth less than 5.00) They went right through via parcel post, delivered to the door, no customs etc. So we have made arrangements to handle SWP branch orders from here making direct shipment. We XXXX be starting this off as soon as we get all the addresses sometime next week. Of course this may hit a snag but it seems to me to be the best possible.

We covered the Ontario Federation with the paper. Don and Myer did it. XXX

How did you make out with the Kutcher case. I thought that the article that you wrote up was very good. Did you manage to get it published? I asked Don to send you the clipping from out of the Militant because I thought you might not have noticed that the Ottawa local sent in a donation to the Kutcher Defecne Committee. I never noticed it myself until Ruth brought it to my attention. I seemed to me that this would be a powerful point in an argument to get your local to make a gesture of support. It is always good if you can show some other Canadian local has already shwon that it understnads the issues at stake.

While
Not knowing the precise situation it seems to me to be correct ot put the heat on the eidtor of Ford Fact to report the Kutcher case...but it would be easier if you played up the position taken by the international executive and the support already won from many other UAW locals. His argument...that it is Americna news would really get the belly laugh from Windsor workers

Sorry to hear that you Don were turned down by the CCF however we can let it ride and at a later date as the unions move in on the CCF we may have contact with all the best elements via union PA that we may need. Very much interested to hear that you ha have been around to the SIP. We have had a very good experience with the Toronto SIPer.s During the elections a fellow wrote in asking for literature. We finally managed to contact him and found that he was not an slper but was very close to them. In fact he wrote both us and the IPP on behalf of a few friends of his to find out what other party(s thoguth. He appears to have already had some doubts about the sectarian character of the SIP. There are three of them, all quite young(about 18) intelligent, they are coming to our forums and classes and I am sure we will get them into the party. We have approciahed them but the leader is holding off because as he says he wants to study more about us. Last week one of them told me that Debragh refused to discuss any more with him. That fellow who attended the Windsor meeting and thought they were Trotskyist must be an excellent type.....really get after him. I am sure that from time to time the SIP must turn up some good elements who really belong with us. And of course since we are unable to carry on any mass public activity in Windsor the SIP is the only place non Stalinist, non reformist workers could go. I think it would be a good idea for both of you to go when you are not tied up with more pressing work. See if you can take that chap over to meet the real Trotskyists in Detroit.

How is Napier, and I can never remember the name of that other chapCCFer, coming along.

Very much interested to hear what progress you are making in the UAW. However I guess we can wait till you come to Toronto in a week or so.

Did you get copies of the SWP INternal Bulletin containing the IEC report? If you did not I will mail you two copies. I have mailed Maurice a copy as he has asked me but I figure you are looked after.

We expect both of you to come this Easter...no bull-shit about it.

Hope you received Planet Without a Visa in good shape along with the small pamphlet as interest. It is an excellent novel...the best that I have read for several years. I dont understand why the Militant doesn't carry a review. I see that Time said it was the best political novel of the year in Europe.(for what their opinion is worth) We have been held up on the book-binding. the Binder has been sick and has not been able to do any homework. By luck we may have them though when you arrive on the holiday.

comradely

Ross

I have just noticed that I overlooked one of your letters so I have had to tear the the envlope opem and re-commence....

Good to see you are taking on the biggest stuff—Reuther. Interesting to note your comments on the IPP. We should spend sometime seriously considering what elements are approachable. The Stalinist movement is in a real crisis. I suppose you read about the removal of Markos(Greece ] and their confession of their bankruptcy when the Brtish landed on Greece and they collaborated. The next issue of the [redacted] the paper will report about the resignation of [redacted] one of the leaders of the Spanish partym the purge of the Norwegian leadership. I suppose you noted our report on the expulsion of the editor of the Yugoslav editor here in Canada. The leader of the Indian party has been purged. Fred Collins here in Toronto, trade union leader and CCL Council caucus leader has silently dropped out and gone inot business. This togehter with China, Tito and the Ceylon stalinist joining our parliamentary fraction is good information to real pose before a Stalinist rank and file and expose the bureuacratic mmm democratic centralist character of the party and to then go on and show the origin of the IPP political line.

I think it would be a good idea to have a sub campaign. If the weather is suitable in Windsor I think you should go ahead in your own time. We would have liked it best if we could split the campaigns and hold them at different times of the year in order to stabilize the circulation but heretofore other work prevented it. Toronto will be puting oneon early in May. If you think you can get people to the door and to stay and listen at this time of the year I am ioo per cent in favour of doing it now. Will send you the Windsor list in a few days.

About the class. We have good material here at hand that could serve as a guide. Did one of you consider holding it or were you going to attempt to arrange it that a Detroit comrade would handle it. Again 100% in favour

March 18, 1949

Morris Stein (Socialist Workers Party)

New York

Dear Comrade Stein;

Thank you very much for the copy of Comrade Robert's correspondence on the Vancouver situation. I had intended to write you concerning tie SWP P.C. decision that appeared in the minutes last week and this enables me to do so much easier knowing that you are already fairly familiar with the situation out there.

As far as the National Committee of the RWP is concerned, as far as the Vancouver branch is concerned, the Whalen-Bradley affair is a closed book. We of course appreciate the fact that they remain on the scene as influential men in the trade union movement and we will be continually confronted with the problem of treating with them. However in order to preserve the integrity of the movement and not just the Canadian section we have been compelled to draw the balance sheet. The Vancouver branch is now in the process of suspending them from the party. Charges are now being drawn up and. it would appear certain that the action will be completed by the time that Frank would meet with them.

Nonetheless we are in complete agreement with your proposal and very anxious that Frank should make another attempt to visit them. We would be more than pleased that they would appeal the suspension imposed by the Canadian party. In conversations with leading and responsible members of the Vancouver branch they have declared their break with the Canadian party and have intimated that they believe it necessary to commence again the task of building the Canadian section of the Fourth in opposition to "the Ross Dowson dominated" party. They have intimated that they intend to appeal to the International. While I am convinced that they have no such intentions it would seem to me to be a good thing that they should be given the opportunity. Frank's visit would provide them with this opportunity.

We are in complete agreement with the manner that Comrade Roberts conducted himself. We do not believe that he proceeded too formally or that his conduct has shifted weight in the favor of any possible ultra-hards in the branch.

This experience has been lived to the full. To further hesitate to make any decisive moves could only result in the complete demoralization of the Vancouver branch as it is now constituted. Every possible opportunity has been given Whalen and Bradley to reconsider their course, to work with the party fraction in the IWA, to reintegrate themselves in the party, to no avai1.

W hen, early in October, I arrived there, in the midst of the IWA fight, neither had any contact with the party. In order to permit them the greatest latitude Whalen was granted an unjustifiable request for leave of absence. Bradley never even bothered to request one. Not only have they not lived up to the terms of the leave of absence but they have informed responsible

members of the party that they have no intention of working with the sizeable IWA party fraction and are prepared to fight it.

When asked for financial contributions they have defiantly declared that they will never give a red cent to "Dowson's party."

These developments are not of course a complete bolt from the blue. There have been longstanding differences between the N.O., Whalen-Bradley and the Vancouver branch. None of these differences have reached a satisfactory solution. However not one of these differences which in my opinion have only reached their logical culmination in this present situation, have been made a point of excuse or argument in this situation. Whereas heretofore Whalen-Bradley had the sympathy and support of the majority of the Vancouver comrades they now face an aroused and indignant Vancouver branch.

This of course is a startling development, for these comrades have been all along the recognized leaders of the branch, honoured and respected as the most capable trade unionists, etc. The transformation has been of their on making. Because of these past differences, and conscious of the fear that some comrades may have that its actions may be prejudiced, the National Office has studious1y evaded intervening in the situation.

The Vancouver branch has gone through the experience and is now in the process of winding it up and assimilating the lessons. The entire National Committee is in agreement with the Vancouver actions. These factors convince me that our actions are absolutely correct. If there are organizational "softs" and "hards" we can safely say that the softs have carried out this action.

As to their opportunism in the IWA, and there is a great deal of evidence, we have carefully avoided injecting this into the dispute. We are fighting this out on an organizational basis.

Once again may I say we are not only in agreement with your recommendation that Frank attempt to see these comrades but are strongly desirous that this be done. While in my opinion it is quite remote it is nonetheless possible that we may save these two very valuable comrades.

According to a report from Vancouver when Dan was last up there he proposed that an intensified school of two weeks duration be mapped out and that he would make arrangements to conduct it. The comrades inform me that Weiss is to be in Seattle for a period of two weeks and this would enable Dan to make the necessary arrangements to come to Vancouver and to lead the school. We hope that this meets with your approval. If there are any expenses other than the usual transportation costs would you let me know.

I will be forwarding the sum of one hundred dollars as the RWP contribution to the setting up of the Far East Sub-Secretariat by the end of next week. If you are sending over any funds before then you could safely advance that amount on our behalf.

warmest greetings

Ross Dowson

Ruth Benson (SWP, New York)

March 24, 1949

Mary Wood - column byline for Ruth?
mats = photos = cartoons

Dear Ruth;

It was good to hear from you the other night. Sorry if my failure to send you a copy of the paper got you het up. As I told you on the phone I had intended to send you a copy along with a reply to your latest letters.

Well here it is. Lots of typos. But this time I am in the clear. The fault lies entirely in Murray and Don. Murray was up for the week-end. He got layed off so I pressed the two of them to work on the proofs at the print shop. But if you think its bad the way it is you should have seen the mistake that I caught....after half the paper was run off. It was such a bad one that I made Merchants do the job over. They were half done the inside so this meant scrapping that half and running another 1000 or so with one and four again. Everything was going along smoothly so I picked up the paper and is my custom started to read my own article...the one on the CCF I mean. I almost fell off the chair. While putting in the corrections and shiffting a few lines from one column to another a new chap on the stone mucked it up so that it read; "And after confronting us with these two man-power for progress, Coldwell chooses Wall Street." The two lines now at the top of column 3 were at the bottom making a mumbo jumbo there also. Merchants did not say much after all it was their mistake and that one on top of the left in tow lines in the LaCroix article was too much. They also had little baiss because they had a new folder which did not operate and we had to fold the paper by hand.

Not much variation in the lay-out of page one. We had intended to have a streamer right accross the top for the La Croix article and a four column head on the AFL but just as I went to lay the paper out both St Laurnet and Pearson made statements to the effect that they had no intention of banning the IPP so I thought it best to play it down a bit. As you have no doubt noticed we are trting to finish more articles on page one. How do you like page three...I am quite proud of it myself.

Everyone was quite pleased to see Mary Wood give one last kick before she cashed in. The column is up to her usual standard,,,,,too bad she has siad her last. But she no doubt has a hot time were she has gone.

Thanks for the mats...havent given the next issue a thought yet but will probably use the cost of living one unless Laura cooks up a good one on the Atlantic Pact for the coming issue of the Militant. I like her new style ~~XXXXX~~ Big Business. Don received your letter alright. Didn't say anything about it. The Lysenk stuff was a bit old to us...I read his main points in an article in the New Statesman and Nation which was incidently used a part of the source by the comrade who wrote the article on the Lysenko Case for the British Socialist Appeal. Had a little spat with him right after the letter on his article on Mindszenty. After exposing the hypocricy of St Laurent and Perason he kept on the same line so that the article started and ended with the idea that we believed in freedom of religion. I argued it out with him with no noticeable effect,..just un huh, un huh. But the next morining he said he agreed with all the changes. He thereupon told me he did not think he could write but I think we handled that alright for the next night he dug right in and did the LaCroix Bill and the first edit which we were able to go over together and freely make changes here and there.

As a matter of fact Don also condensed the Churchill article. He has been digging into the work down here in the last three weeks. Has been going out looking for a job about every other morining the past two weeks but with no success.

I suppose I should tell you the big news...Joyce has had her baby, it is a girl and weighs about 6½ pounds. She had it Monday and both are doing well. I havent been up to see her yet. Tonight was the first night anyone other than the mother or husband could visit the hospital. Sonia and Mrs Rosenthal are taking it over. Had an amusing little scene at the last branhc meeting. We read out the announcment to the branch and there was some kidding suggestions about the branch recommending some names. Sonia got quite indignant. It seems that they want to call it Nancy and are quite determined about it. Joyce wont be short any baby sitters.

I am [illegible] hopping back and forth as your letter hits my eye and some little incident I think you might be interested comes into my mind. Will certainly send you a copy of the next bulletin as soon as we get it out. We started to work on it this afternoon. Wont be out for a couple of days anyway . I dont think it is worth the trouble for you to write to Joe . You have no more influence on him than I. I think I told you he called Vern a stooge at a recent executive meeting....well you have been a stooge in his mind for a long time. I blame his attitude for Gord's disgraceful walking out. I dont think Gord had the courage,or what should we call it, to have to face Joe whom he has the utmost hatred for. Joe has let his [illegible] emotions so dominate his mind that there is n't a single issue that comes up but that he turns it into a prolonged and fantastic discussion. I can hardly bring myself to attend the executive meetings, they are so unprofitable [illegible]. Wait till you see his contribution to the bulletin.

He handled the forum last week...it was the best that he has ever given. He has also picked up a very good contact at work, who attended the forum and was quite impressed. I think he will straighten out but he is going to have to learn hthe hard way. It is much worse with Sonia . Joe honestly thinks he has some important political differences . I am a bastard and a liar but for political reasons in Joes mind. [illegible] Unfortunately Sonia has all of Joe's hate and it is that but with no shadow of political differences or understandings. Their attitude is no threat to the branch, they are isolated to a pitiful extent...it only casuese little embarassments.

Your letter of transfer.....the truth and nothing but the truth. I have always prided myself on my objectivity....never even haditated with a single sentence. So you think that the last couple of months may have destroyed all that had gone on before. Baloney. I wont be so gallant as to say that nothing happend in the last month or so but a couple of little trifling erros cant [illegible] wipe out all that had gone on before. This may be a little pretnetious but Luxembourg's errors did not andcannot wipe out her great contributions.

With regards to Dan and the Vancouver trip. I am glad that he did not go. We have written Lloyd and Tom off the books . There can be no turning back now on this. We correctly put it in the hands of the branch who have had over the years some illusions about these two and they to a man are for settling the matter. Perhaps you do not know the recent developments. But Lloyd told Stanton that he would not work with our comrades in the IWA and was as a matter of fact prepared to wage war on them. We have bent over as far as we can--they have rejected us. They reject the Canadian section including all the Vancouver comrades as being useless and dominated by myself. They refuse to give us "a red cent" and have said they are going to appeal to the International. The last line of tripe is in my opinion the

only real reason for Lang going to see them . I know these two guys and they are not going to turn back they are not big enough. They have shown how small they are in all these past years of squabbles. But it is good that an authroitative comrade from the US go to see cthem give them his opinion so that in the future under the shock of new developments they might be able to turn back. But I am absolutely sure that this is excluded for the next period. Lloyd has not denounced the party but it seems that he has made it widely known that he is no longer one of us. The Stalinists have been making great game with him. His own machine, lead by people who he was talking about as good party material has taken over. It appears that it is common knowledge that he is isolated in his own local, that is from the apparatus. I dont think he will last long. We are waiting to see how Tom makes out in the elections that are taking place.

The branch is coming along alright. The meeting reported in the paper was attended by 21 people. Very good. Morris send me a copy of Dan's letter and I must say I am in complete agreement with all he says and his actions. What we need of ocurse is leadership out there. The comrades are aware of this and are making arragements for Dan to come up and stay for an intense two weeks of education.

No word on the Standard article and I am no longer pushing Bill about it. I t looks to me like it is now out of the questions as so much time has slipped past. Ed is working in the town of Guelph in a job priniting shop. He has finally joined the ITU. He intends to stay there for another month or so and then come back here. Unfortunately I have not had much time to talk with him the last few times he has come in so I really don't know how he is making out. Will probabyly see him this week-end.

Glad to see you are wrtiting Hap. She was quite pleased to receive your letter and proudly showed me part of it on Debs. She is working very hard. The last three weeks she has been on nights. Has little time but comes down loyallu to put out the notices, and does her best to help in the socialis. [illegible] Hope you can manage to write to her the odd time for as you know we have no women in the party who can help her along very much. For your information when next you write , she and Chuck have decided to separate again, Harold has left his family and after Hap can make some arrangements with the kids they will probably be together. Just so you dont get crossed up. Chuck appears to be so sensitive about it that he wont come to the socials [illegible] or forums when he comes in on the week-end. I just heard this after the last forum. He is not coming in this week-end but I am going to go after him next time he drops down to Toronto.

Going to try to hold a mass meeting on the CCF and the Atlantic Pact a week this coming Sunday. last few forums have been wel l attended. Been a bit of shifting in our contacts. Coffey is holding out on us but one of the gang is swingign over rapidly and we are approaching him to join. Nic Olynik's two contacts are coming regularly to the forums and one of the best contacts turned up by the elections finally managed to get to the forums and is coming down to do some work in the offcie this Saturday. They are coming along slowly but coming ....remember when we couldn't find a word to say when contacts came up on the agenda.

Keep up the good fight xxx against the roaches.

Iets know waht you think of the paper. By the way Sylvia has sent us no word of the branch orders for vthe manifestoes. What is the score.

comradely

Ross

March 29,1949

To the Montreal Branch;

Dear Comrades;

We have received a report of your discussion of recent demands made on us by the XX leadership and what our policy should be towards these demands.

I have also noted your suggestion that I should come down to Montreal for a short stay. I would certainly like to meet the comrades and discuss some of the problems confronting the party however at this time it would not be very convenient. I am slated to speak at a public meeting on Sunday, we are having an editorial board meeting on Friday and I would like to try and finish up a bulletin this week. If it is not urgent I would like to delay the trip until we have the Arpil issue of the paper cleared up.

I think we are all agreed that if at all possible we want to keep all our forces in Montreal. The situation is just beginning to open up there for us and we can put all the forces at our disposal to good use.

However it is necessary for us to correctly assess the importance of our positions in the XX. From recent experiences I am inclined to believe that the XX leadership is in no mood to be receptive to our wishes. I am inclined to believe that they will issue an order that one of the staff go to Northern Ontario and I am convinced that at this time we should bow to their pressure. From recent experiences that we have had with them it is obvious that they do not really require our services and that if we continue to buck their directives their request will become a demand either go or give up your IWA posts.

I believe that it is preferable that the Montreal branch suffer the loss of one of the XXX comrades for the short term of several months than give up the XX posts. While the XX does not hold the great promises that it once did when it appeared that the International was seriously going to attempt to do a job in Quebec., it seems to me that our posts are still of considerable value. They are one of the few avenues that our party has into the trade union movement, and almost the only connections that we have with the organized French Canadian working class. I am not at all satisfied that our work there has been as fruitful as it might have been but it has already turned up a worker-leader with connections and contacts.....the only element I might say that we have turned up for a considerable time.

I think we must recognize that the branch as a whole is isolated from the French Canadian working class and that there are at present few avenues for us to work on. This general period of lull and passivity in the labor movment together with the atmosphere created by the Padlock Law does not present us with any great and promising opportunities for work and growth. There can be of course a rapid transformation but is the branch now confronted with any more favourable fields of operation that are left untapped by the lack of a Grenier or Beauchamp.

I think that it is important that we maintain the XX posts. At the same time that the branch should pay more attention to the use that these posts can be put to and more consciously take advantage of them.

I do not see that the temporary wothdrawal of one of the XX comrades from the Montreal branch is such a ser ous matter and will have any really important effect on Montreal work. It is after all only for a short period. In so far as development of a comrade is concerned a per od of work in Northern Ontario may be very beneficial. There is much profitable work to be done there. A very important section of the French Canadian working class is there. One of our Toronto comrades was in Sudbuy recently and reports that e made some very good contacts besides selling 6 subscriptions to ur press. I think our brnahc is sufficiently strong to stand the temporary withdrawal of a comrade.

In my opinion it would be preferable that Grenier remain in Montreal and Beauchamp have the mass work experience in Northern Ontario. Certainly the fact that Beaucahmp has not been in as close contact with the party as Grenier is worthy of close consideration however there are other factors in the case. Grenier is our contact man with the IPP dissidents---one of our most important feilds of work at this time. Grenier is a much more experienced trade unionist than Beauchamp and at this stage is a more vital contact between the branch and organized labor.

[illegible]e I hope that you have been able to stall off the XX leadership so [illegible] that you can give this letter your consideration before taking any definite action.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

April 25, 1949

Dear Ruth; (Benson, SWP, New York)

I wonder if you could rush us the mats for the front page cartoons that appeared in the following issues of the Militant

Febraury 28
March 7
April 25

If we receive it in time we will use the April 25 ~~XXXXX~~ May Day cartoon in our next issue.

We are going to press early with this issue...thatis as eearly as I can get it out. The Vancouver comrades are puting the heat on us. I have wrtiten them two or thrseletters on the CCF situation out there and never had a reply...then suddenly I get the demand that we put out a special issue of the paper covering the CCF Convention developments...and that we get it out at once so that it can hit the delegates and clubs before the delegates have a chance to make their reports. I have tried to explain to them the situation down there but they dont seem to be able to graps it. However I have decided to get right down to puting the May issue out now instead of the middle of the month. I tried to bring the April issue out earlier than is our usual but did not get enough cooperation in time to do it. I have intended to try to get the paper out in the first wek for sometime now so we might as well try with this issue.

They have some fanatastic ideas how the coming issue should look. They sent a ong with their request about 7 two three and four page articles, each dealing with some apsect of the convetion...no real round up. What is more there is none dealing with the role or line of the opposition, no criticism, advise etc all of it is an exposure of the leadership. Bill suggests that we slap the program box on the front page. They are sending photos of the big shots. Well we are going to end up by giving it the lead, guess Ill have to try to pull some of those tid-bits together, write an edit on the opposition etc. We had two delegates there...a Vancouver comrade and Byron. Lillian Whtiney had the good idea of going to the convention as a Labor Challenge reporter but noe of the reports reflect this...however she has had no experience before. No need for me to give you the picture as it will be in the paper and of course I havent got the most important...the role of the opposition...but I gather it is a hodge-podge, supports UN etc. I have wired them for this.

Of course the B.C. development is rousing great interest. We distributed at a Colwell meeting here last Friday night. Got a good reception. The last isuee was made for it.

I have just booked a room for you at the Ford Hotel. I think it is one of the better ones in the city...clean, central, nicely decoreated and not too expensive. I booked a 2.50 room. I hope that is not too much. I ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ I doubt if you can get a decent room for anything less. So it is arranged for the Friday night May 6th. I suppose the airport taxi will drop you off there if you ask them so I will meet you there. Hope you can make it.

That caption one the cartoon was about all I could think we coild do

in an attempt to give it a Canadian angle. If we had taken it three column I was going to ask Joe to insert a little lino figure but I front page lay-out was getting a little stodgy with all t ese three column cartoons.

Hey- hey dont you think you are going a little far on this black predecessors.....water boy.

Right on the Mindsseenty head in the previous issue. I wasn't satisfied but let it go to keep peace in our little family. Its Barry's and Don's in vention. That awful grammar as you no doubt suppose was the product of my pen ....rewrite on an article by Myer...I blush.

I dont think it was necessary for us to issue any call for meetings re the first long article analysing the Colwell position on the Pact. After all a convention was in the offing. Now that they have had it and we have the results we will be required to advance a policy for the opposition. I get somewhat tired of reading articles that always advance a program. I dont think it hurts at all and above all in the above situation to just have a hot criticism. In the last issue we have advanced our position and now in the coming one we will be giving a lead to the opposition

I have just about sent all of the list of orders for the Manifesto that Sylvia sent me. I have been puting them in the mail one and two atba time. The will be all out by two more days. Has Sylvia any more she wants filled. I have a few more that are wrapped up for shipment to Pioneer and I will continue to drop them in at intervals. As a matter of fact I think we might as well fill the rest of the Pioneer shipment but for those now being held via this method. A trifle expensive but waht the hell. Will you remind Sylvia to keep sending me any orders they get for it will save double mailing costs. N.Y. can use the ones going to Pioneer.

Just returned from Montreal. Situation is the best yet. Jean is coming along well and is starting a class on Marxism with three more members of the executive of his union. You knew that one of them is already in the branch. The third issue of La Verite is out coming out next week. Moral is very good. The two french comrades there have been a big help. They have some sectarian tendencies but I think that they can be straightened out alright. The fellow seems to be a very capable fellow. Connections with the Ex LPP group are not very good and the situation doesnt seem to be too promising in so far as they are concerned. But we have six people now, all are very serious, the paer is coming out regularly and we are making good progress. Jean thinks the possiblity of the educational group coming inot the party is good.

Well I had better close off or there will be nothing to tell you when you arrive. Dont forget the mats. See you soon

comradely

Ross

May 13, 1949

Windsor
Dear Don:

Hope you received the books alright. They look like a pretty nice job to me, although it would have been nicer if they had been bound in different colors. He said he had a hell of a time with the job you did on the trial pamphlets, nails and all.

I am not sending you the bill yet XXXXX I am waiting until we receive the copies of T.U. in Canada we ordered and until I can find time to get down to the Stalinist book room to pick up those Lenin volumes that you want.

Received the copy of the letter that you sent to Archer. I dont know that I have any particular criticism to offer....as a matter of fact it is rather well written. There is just one little political question which I might say a few words on——that is the role of the social democracy in Germany. The XXXXXXXXXX role of social democarcy in 1933 was XXXXX just as wretched as the Stalinist role and not second only to the Stalinist " betrayals. I have come accross this idea XXXXXXXXXX with other comrades. No doubt it was XXXXXXXX gained from reading Tortskys German pamphlets. The situation was that XX nobody to whom we were addressing ourselves had any illusions about Social Democracy after their support of World War I and their murder of Luxemburg and Leibknecht. All revolutionists however expected revolutionary action from the CP. XXXXXXXXX However this is aside from the letter itself.

XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX Glad to hear that you did a good job at the meeting.

Yes I agree that there is value in having a friendly relationship with such types as Archer. Of course we can have no illusions about them. If we were a serious force , I mean a powerful one, their attitude would be much different. Of course they must not be a substitute for serious work amongst the rank and file workers. It is easy to be diverted from the slow and patient work with the rank and file by XXX more interesting flashy flattering relationships with the leaderships. I am always afraid of this temptation to work from the top, combinations and agreements with the leadership, substitution of serious work with rank and file elements for slick manoevers on top. It is a serious danger confronting isolated and able comrades, comrades in the position of both you and Hugh. It would be well if you continually warned yourselves of this danger. What we want is another good workers in Windsor to join our party.

I see by Saturday's paper that Local 200 PAC recommended that England and McLean run against the CCF candidates. What is the score on this. Are they going to stand or is it just a bit of a propoganda campaign by the Stalinists to cut away CCF support. Is the PAC stalinist dominated and trying to take advantage of dissastifaction of many militants with the petty bourgeois character of CCF candidates? Is this move stalinist inspired or does it signify a left a genuine left turn on the part of Windsor labor. Will you and Hugh follow the situation there very closely clipping the paper, taking notes etc. We want to carry something in the paper on the Windsor PAC fights, role of the CCF leadership. This should give us a good opportunity to call for trade union control of the CCF, determining who is to be a candidate etc.

Will drop you a line later. How did you like the last couple of issues LC (ends)

May 17, 1949

Dear Murray and Jean;

I see that you gathered that your material arrived too late. You had me in quite a panic waiting mail by mail for the promised material. XXXXXXXXX I received La Verite with the Manifesto in it and the Asbestos article. And I kpet waiting and waiting for the originals or the translations until we just couldn't wait any longer. By luck Ed quit his job in Guelph and he came down to the office so I put him to work when we just couldnt wait any longer to translating the articles while I worked on other material.

I saw that it dropped the slogans and the socialist ending that papeared in the Militant. I think that these were a serious gap in the manifesto but I was also up a tree for space. It was considerably longer than I thought it was going to be and I was having the heat put on me for a really big coverage of the B.C. convention. However I think that everything turned out alright. I got a hot letter from Vancouver about the CCF Convention coverage...I had to drop one complete article on a fight that developed over the Sales Tax

What did you think of Paul Kanes article on page 3. This wasn't in the cards as far as Vancouver was concerned. As a matter of fact all the Vancouver articles were directed solely against Coldwell and took a very soft attitude towards the Cameron, Steeves, Weaver gang and made no attempt to crtically analyse the opposition and give it direction. Probably be hearing from them in a few days after they read my criticisms and justifications for changes in their contributions.

I sent the Asbestos article onto New York but in my opinion it isn't at all what they want. It was written a few hours before the news came through of the road block and the seizure of the town. Then I sent it to them I told them that I just cant take the time out to be Militant correspondent until we can solve our staff problems. ...or I would have re-written it to cover the latest terrific developments.

Received the subs you sent in but do not think that J.M.B.'s sub should go to his home. He sent me one for the box and one for the house. Am taking the liberty of cancelling the house copy and turning the box one into a year sub.

Havent done anything about investigating getting $1000 financial help as I learn from the comrades XXXXknow much to my amazement that while Nosworthy and Joliffe did make those remarks about Croll they also said that they are going to run someone. Will settle this matter in a couple of days. If we could make somthing on it I too think it would be worth all the effort it would wring from us.

Am returning the Manifesto. Will write shortly.

Pilar oka Poland

comradely

ross

May 17, 1949

Windsor:

Dear Hugh: (Dawson)

Received the money for the subs and sustaining fund. Is this the beginnig of the local sub drive? [redacted] I see that they are pretty good stuff. We have started things rolling here. I dont know just how many subs we have so far but it must be around 80 anyway. We are getting a good reception. I met a fellow who knew you at Massey's, cant recall his name, seemd to be a good type although his attitude was one of disbelief that we could sahieve our objective..."but I'll be there when and if its starts rolling."

What kind of raction do you get to the paper at the distributions. We covered some of the [redacted] club meetings and were very freindly received. Coldwell had a [redacted] meeting here at Central Tech rather small, about 800 I would guess mostly old people, mixed reception. They disowned the paper from the platform with the announcement that they had not authorized us to carry out the distribution.

Pleasantly suprised to hear that the Immigration Dept has asked you to appear before a Board. I thought that they would conveniently forget you. Have you got your story lined up? I think your line should be as you gave it when they stopped you. Sure your brothers are radicals but you are not at all interested. You had better be a unionist though at least. I am sure they have information on you from stooges in the Windsor labor movement. As a matter of fact it is possible that they have a hell of a lot on you that some one has given them..a stalinist or stool pidgeon. For Christ sake dont kibitz or wise crack. Try to answer yes and no . Remember they are pretty good at quizzing. Make sure your friends in Detroit if you have any are safe ones. They may have information from the other side. Remember the incident with your car.

Hard to say just what inviting you to the Board means, whether it is because they dont know or because its a necessary formality.Of course it is no tragedy if they have the goods on you and you cant go back and forth. [redacted] When we can get a class going we will always be able to get one of the Detroit comrades to come over hear. And I am sure we could manage to get them to come over the odd time to keep you up to date on what is doing in Detroit and in the UAW.

I guess you case will tell us the score on Don.

Received your clippings on the UAW PAC fight. So it turned out to be just a political maneuver on the part of the Stalinists, England and McLean never intending to run anyway. It was certainly a diabolical and effective maneuver taking advantage of [redacted] many workers disatisfaction with the petty bourgeois character of the CCF and candidates... woth plenty to who---is there an IPP candidate(Prince) running there or Martin. Keep all the clippings on PAC in Windsor and on the CCF I am planning an article for the next issue. I will let you know the deadline so you can give me all your ideas on the question up to date also.

Incidently I took a look again at your first letter telling me you were stopped. Dont just tell them you do not have a RWP card. Tell them you are not a member at all. Let them think your are cooperating with them but that you just dont know much about us , you dont know where Murray lives because he recently moved there and you never have occassion to write him. Dont hesitate to tell simple lies,,,,not involved ones though as they are easy to be caught on.

Best of luck

Ross

June 15, 1949

Dear Murray and Jean;

Received the wrist watch in the mail alright. Incredible face on it isn't it. Thanks very much, we will save the price of a prize in the next raffle we have.

Also received your letter on the French comrade. I am quite sure that we can obtain the two necessary letters. Joe and Vern would probably be alright. There is however the question of the mayor's approval, I could easily arrange for the defeated mayor's approval but I am doubtful if McCallum would sign such a thing. Possibly all that is needed is a notary's stamp that so and so is the person he says he is and that he lives at such and address and that he says he can and will put this man and family up. If a notary is all that is needed that would be fine. Otherwise you would get into the difficulty of who is this person , what is he coming for, how do you know him etc. These questions are rather difficult ones to answer if you are quizzed and how could two different persons knwo these same people? It would seem to me that a notary is all that is needed. If you think this is so just drop me a line and we will have the letters in you hand before the week is out. Murray can supply t e French comrade the necessary information on Vernand Joe, cook up what ever story seems plausible and necessary and let us know what it is.

I have been thinking over the sum and substance of the long talk we had on the decision to cease publication of La Verite and the decision to attempt to organize a front organization in an attempt to break out of our present isolation.

First I am agreeable to the suspension of La Verite. I think we all agree that this is only temporary. It was requring too much energy in realtionship to our present forces and its apparent immediate results. Whether we should continue to publish it occassionally when an important issue requires it will have to be decided on the course thatour future work takes.

With regards to the new course we are setting ourselves...this front organization, I know we ourselves cannot yet be any too clear on just what its precise character is going to be...it is an attempt to do something that has never been done before and we are not yet at the stage in working on it to have a very good idea what its immediate prospects are.

Jean and I went over a list of persons and groups that we think might be interested; the Dube [illegible] Lagnon group, Whalen and his contacts, Dr Wevrick and some tired radicals, the Alert club, Wlash, trade union elements Boulanger, Roy etc. It is quite a diverse group, quasi-Stalinists, stalinophobes, cynics, trade union militants etc. Thinking it over one thing seems certain to me and that is that no action is going to come out of such a group. It can only be a discussion circle for quite a period. It is not going to give leadership to anyoneelse but will first have to go through a period of internal clarification. We will be in there and will patiently put forward our ideas trying to convince a core of them off certain elements of our program and as we progress in this only then will the group be able to take a stand on this and that vital question confronting the canadian

workers.

I do not see how it can be other than a group that will be completly turned inwards in its first period. It contains such diverse elements; CCFers-anti CCFers, Stalinists of varied hues, I gather that Whalen has no use for Dube-Gagnon, tired radicals, adventurists-militants. How can it talk about political action? taking stands on this and that question of importance when it contains elements with such fundamentally opposite ideas?

If this is the situation then it seems to me that there is no rush to get the thing moving. As a matter of fact with the federal elections the biggest issue right now, with the CCF and the LPP both running candidates and with all these persons taking definite positions on who to support since the LPP and CCF are fighting one another it would seem t me to be almost impossible to do anything with it for a period.

I would like to suggest that we put it on ice for about a month and utilize the pr sent intense political atmosphere to do a little experimenting. I see that the CCF is running twenty candidates in Quebec. Coldwell intimates that they may possibly win in Verdun and Cartier. Jean tells me that the CCL Quebec leadership is being forced in behind the CCF. The press reports that Coldwell held a few really big meetings when there. At anyrate the fact that it is running twenty candidates makes it a fairly big factor and added to this is the considerable opposition that has arisen to Duplessis and the stand of the CCF-CCL on Asbestos. I think that we have to investigate this movement and that now is the time when it is quite possible that many new elements are being turned up by the recent developments and for the lack of any other movement gravitating towards the CCF. During an election campaign , through appearing at the headquarters, giving them a little help we can possible establish a freindly relationship. At anyrate we will have an opportunty to attempt to assessthis movement in Quebec and where it is going.

And as you well know t is has been a key question confronting us now for several years. Is the CCF going to be the avenue of political action for the Quebec workers or is its englishness ~~XXX~~ pro war, imperialistic character going to force the work rs into some other channel. I think that the next few weeks contact with the CCF and the election returns are going to throw some valueable new light on this vital question.

Maybe we should go into the CCF and drop this whole idea of setting up a front of some type ? I dont know. But the decision to organize the front means in essence to reject in advance the possible need and advisability to go into the CCF. I dont think we should be prepared to do this until we go around the CCF in the next week and try to find an honest answer. ~~XXX~~ we will be required to work fast as the campaign has only another two weeks. Sorry I did n t think of this sooner.But during this campaign we are going to be able to establish a better relatonship if we get hot and go aroun the headquarter and particpate in the campaign. If we are not yet agreeable to doing it in Cartier lets go to Verdun

Lets try it out anyway,all of us including ~~XXX~~ and E and see what the score is. I certainly think the front can wait.

comradely

K---

June 21, 1949

Dear Jean and Murray;

I assume you got my letter on the question of our position on Trinity and Cartier. What is your answer on the motion? must

It is in my opinion that you take a position at onwe, even if only a temporary position. The question of the prestige of the party leadership demands it.

Answer me by return wire Favor of the motion yes
against the motion no.

Here is a clipping that will no doubt interest you

comradely

Ross

Had a bang up street corner meeting last Saturday. Took the line of opposition to Buck. This is a key question in any area where we can hope to put forward our ideas from the soap box.

Holding a street corner meeting this coming Friday. What is our line otherwise we cannot hold any public meetings. Joe is taking the line that the party is split down the middle on this question and is puting the Toronto branch through an agonizing and disorganizing series of sharp polemics. I want the answer here by Wednesday nights branch meeting. Wire it.

Reg votes yes — No word from Angus

"Reg votes yes — No word from Angus"

# INTERNAL BULLETIN

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THE REVOLUTIONARY WORKERS PARTY

of Canada

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1949-June

# SOME REMARKS ON CRITICAL SUPPORT

In order to advance our revolutionary program and in order to build the revolutionary party we have adopted a policy of critical support of the CCF.

Political action of the Canadian workers has taken a reformist detour. Today's expression of working class independent political action is the CCF. It is a mass party, with 32 members at Ottawa, it is the government in one province, the opposition in several; it has the entire power of the CCL-CIO behind it, and important support is developing in the AFL-TLC. It expresses an elemental move on the part of the masses into independent political action.

Our objective is to advance revolutionary Marxist working class politics. Our aim is to advance our Marxist program and build our revolutionary party. We know our party is the only genuine working class party because in its program alone is correctly expressed the aims and objectives, the historic interests of the working class. But right now our movement is small. The CCF is a mass party. It is the political manifestation of the Canadian working class.

We must adopt a tactical position towards this movement. Our fundamental line remains the same. Our tactical position to the CCF is expressed in the words "critical support."

We do not support the CCF unconditionally, but critically. Our support is a tactic designed to serve our larger principle – it is designed to advance class consciousness and provide us with an arena and a means of expanding and developing our revolutionary party and popularizing our revolutionary program.

Our tactic of critical support of the CCF means in this coming federal elections that we support CCF candidates in all ridings and all provinces. At the same time it means that we accept no responsibility for the program of the CCF; we accept no responsibility for the records of its candidates. We support the CCF despite its program, which is a petit-bourgeois program and can only ultimately lead to the defeat of the working class movement, and despite the personal records of its candidates many of whom are the most disreputable of elements.

The precise tactic within given localities towards the election work will have to be determined within the framework of this general orientation of critical support and in consultation with the N.C. Lacking the funds and physical resources it appears certain that the RWP will not be running any candidates of its own in this election. In some areas where we have sufficient strength we will participate in electioneering work under our own banner with or own program, calling upon the workers to put the CCF in office. In other areas we will participate as individuals, and of course, as revolutionaries, in the CCF campaign.

Within the framework of this general position of critical support of the CCF we do not support Stalinist candidates wherever they may run against CCF candidates.

Where CCF and LPP candidates are in opposition it is incorrect to advance the idea that we support the Stalinist candidate as the lesser of two evils, with the argument that the program of the LPP is a more correct one, a more working class one.

Such a conception is the product of the most formalistic method of thinking.

It is not possible for us to say that the program of the LPP is more correct than the program of the CCF; both are completely false. At any rate the significance of the CCF does not lie within its program. Our position of critical support is not determined by its program which we correctly estimate as being a petty-bourgeois program.

It is true that the CCF openly supports the war drive, the military budget and the Atlantic Pact. We will leave aside the B.C. section's opposition to the pact. It is true that the LPP opposes the pact and is for the defence of the USSR. We will leave aside the fact that it is for the defence of the bureaucracy and that the nature of its "defence" has led to the isolation and imperilment of what we defend in the USSR.

But wherein does the LPP position have superiority to the CCF's? All its threats and saber-rattling are empty wind. Its pacifist Peace Congresses are no more anti-war than the pious appeals of the CCF leaders to the bourgeoisie to use the Marshall Plan and the Atlantic Pact to prevent war. Programmatically both are paving the way to war.

But the CCF by its very existence, regardless of its formal program or the role of its leadership in parliamentary bodies, is a powerful anti-war force. Only the socialist revolution can prevent a third world war, only the increasing class consciousness of the workers, its ever increasing unity, only class struggle and workers power can prevent war. The CCF is anti-war insofar as it, regardless of the actions of its present leaders, raises the class independence of the workers.

It is in this fact, that it raises the class independence of the workers of Canada, thrusting them into the political arena, that the CCF is anti-war. It is in this fact that it plays a progressive role in the political development of the workers. It is in this fact that we give the CCF our "critical support."

PAUL KANE

## ORGANIZATIONAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTING THE RWP

By Ross Dowson

The period since the 1946 founding convention has been one of the consolidation of the forces of Canadian Trotskyism.

It is true of course that there have been important gains chalked up but this does not negate the fact that this has been in the main a period of consolidation of our forces — of the assimilation and integration of the various elements of diverse background and experience that gathered together to formally launch the party 2 1/2 years ago. It has been a period of testing out

and forging a new leadership, of developing a leadership cadre. It could not help be otherwise. The Canadian party unlike the American party is new both in its leaders and its rank and file. In the Toronto branch for instance there are only 4 or 5 comrades who have any past experience in the pre-war Trotskyist movement. The party is attempting to sort out and develop a leadership at the same time as it is being built.

This sorting out, the development and training of an experienced leadership cadre is one of the key problems that confronts us. This problem has been made very difficult by the small forces which we have to draw from. The recruitment to the party has been on an individual basis. We have not grown from meeting with and absorbing split-offs or breakaways from other political formations which would have supplied us with already partially trained cadres, with mass experience and previous joint or common experiences.

While the problem of leadership has been a painful one for us, nonetheless we can look forward to the possibilities of its fairly speedy solution. Conditions under which we are working are presenting us with many opportunities to break out of narrow propaganda circles into mass actions that can quickly speed up the process of training our present cadre and bring new forces into the party from which we can draw new leaders. In one locality, through participation in municipal elections we have already created a mass figure, one who is well known to advanced workers in a most important industrial area and to a limited extent on a nation-wide basis. Another unusual opportunity has permitted us to develop a mass trade union figure (referring to Ross Dowson's mayoralty campaigns in Toronto and Jean-Marie Bédard's leadership role in the Eastern IWA –ed.)

While we are partially solving this question in action, under the pressure of events, one striking aspect of the question confronts us, that is, the integration of this leadership, its development as a united leadership, a leadership with a common understanding of the most basic problems confronting the party, that has a mutual confidence and self-confidence, that can meet new problems rapidly and with decision.

The vast distances and the considerable variations in problems that separate the branches of the party have rendered the development of an integrated leadership a difficult one. We are still confronted with the need to make radical moves to overcome this problem. One method is to build the national center—by ripping promising comrades out of their locale and sending them to work for a period in the National Office. We set ourselves this task in 1946 and must admit that so far we have failed in it. Far from building up the center, conditions compelled us to strip it to the bone. One of the tasks we must realize in the next few months is an addition to our staff which is now only one professional revolutionist. The weakness of our staff has seriously hampered the development of the party as a whole and the development of our leadership. We must find the means to do this as soon as possible.

We must make every effort to further develop a campaign spirit in the party, a sense of the need to coordinate all our forces at certain given times towards a common objective. The various branches and individual comrades are no doubt doing the best that they can and on occasion are accomplishing amazing feats but we are often not accomplishing all that might be accomplished

because of our failure to appear before the workers as one group. This is partially true in our political work and certainly true in our organizational work. Recruiting and contact work is carried on for the most part on a casual basis and a haphazard manner. Subscription and financial campaigns are met casually by some sections of the party, handled in their own time, etc.

There is a certain organizational conservatism, routinism in some sections of the party, a desire to drift along in the old study class circle, to adapt oneself to the propaganda circle routine. If our party is to grow it must be prepared to adapt itself to rapidly changing conditions and prepared for daring actions.

We have long ago rejected the conception that the mass revolutionary party will be built by the gradual recruitment of individuals and routine educations. The mass party can only be built in action, through penetration into the labor movement as it exists.

While the Canadian party is to a remarkable degree proletarian, too much of its limited strength is in isolated communities which offer no perspectives. Too much of its membership in the industrial urban centers is scattered in diverse industries where our comrades carry on an isolated existence. While our Vancouver, Windsor, and Montreal comrades are quite well concentrated in one or two basic industries, the Toronto branch membership is scattered in a dozen industries in a dozen shops, making it difficult to carry on any planned trade union work and leaving the comrades to their own devices, looking for opportunities that may crop up instead of developing them, creating them. The Toronto branch must overcome this difficulty. Many of the gains that could have been realized by the election campaigns were not because the branch was and remains relatively isolated from the workers

While the party as a whole is well integrated in the trade union movement it is almost completely divorced from the political expression of the masses – the CCF. Except for one or two cases where it was not possible for us to conduct independent work we are not carrying on any serious faction work in this mass movement. We have so far limited ourselves to addressing our press to the rank and file, attempting to meet these workers from the outside. It has long been our contention that reformist movements developing in the epoch of capitalist decay will be torn and crisis-wracked by the pressure of the workers. The struggle over the Atlantic Pact in the B.C. section is only a preview of what is in store for this movement. In 1946 the task was to form the independent revolutionary party. To do so we were compelled to pull out almost everything from the CCF. Now that we have 2 1/2 years of independent existence behind us, have consolidated our forces and have put some flesh on our bones, we must find ways of making more effective contact with the CCF. Up until now the National Committee has given instructions to comrades in isolated communities to join the CCF and work in it where feasible. We must now make CCF fraction work a more serious part of party work. All branches should go through their membership rolls and assign where possible suitable comrades to carry on this phase of our work which is undoubtedly going to assure greater and. greater importance. At a later date it may be advisable that we carry out an entry into the CCF. Fraction work now would provide a valuable reconnaissance.

One of the problems that has caused serious difficulties for our movement is the determination of the proper proportion of agitation and propaganda — both in our press and in general party activities.

We are a propaganda group and quite a smal1 one at that. The main task is to address ourselves to the most advanced strata of the workers and to expound our fundamenta1 ideas. But in these times there are great agitational opportunities forever opening up. Some of those opportunities we must grasp — we must make every attempt to break out of our limited circle. But these opportunities must be chosen with some discrimination. We have limited forces at our disposal. There is a danger of getting tied up, of involving all our forces and expending all our energies in mass actions which can become so exhausting that we are unable to capitalize on them. It is necessary to learn, to know where and how to present our politics to get the greatest profit.

The internal education work in sections of the party is sadly lacking in some respects. Not enough thought is given to the needs of the party membership. This is shown in some branches by the laying cut of extensive plans for classes and the dumping of the plans after a few weeks; in others by what appears to be a lack of suitable material for educational work. The internal life of the party must have as its objective the arming of the party membership, the education of the membership on the most important questions that confront them in their day to day struggles. The comrades must look upon the party as the instrument that prepares them and whips them into shape for the bringing of its ideas into the milieu in which they work.

Some comrades must learn that the party does not exist as an internal educational sect that discusses each and every problem that arises merely for the sake of clarification. More thought must be given to internal educational work, preparation of classes, forums, etc. It is necessary to combine basic educational work, fundamental educational work with its application in the unfolding class struggle.

The circulation of party literature inside the party and by the party to workers close to it is by no means satisfactory. The circulation of the Manifesto of the World Congress, the first RWP publication, is a case in point. The Montreal comrades according to our records have circulated exactly three copies. The Vancouver comrades were forwarded 100 copies and no further word has been heard. The Toronto comrades sold many copies that they took around during sub renewal work. They have sold over 150 but in large part this has been due to their possession of a headquarters and an excellent literature display rack.

The paper has received much more serious attention from the party membership, most of the branches and members at large carrying out regular distributions at picket lines, CCF and LPP meetings. One of the weaknesses here however is that the subscription work for the paper, since we have been holding yearly subscription drives, has been limited almost entirely to the campaigns. Almost no subscription work is being done over the year among friends, in the shops and in working class organizations. This shows a lack of sustained consciousness of the paper as the main party organizer.

The past period has been full of fruitful developments for the party. Despite its limited cadre and general inexperience, the party has shown a considerable awareness of the problems confronting it and is revealing that it is passing cut of a probing searching stage in its development. The Vancouver branch has had a most fruitful experience in the violent struggle that broke out in the B. C. lumber-workers union. The Toronto comrades had an opportunity to come to grips with the problem of connecting agitation around immediate slogans with propaganda for our complete combined program in the municipal elections. The Montreal comrades under the impulsion of the publication of La Vérité, which marks a high point in our development, are coming to grips with the burning French Canadian question.

As the crisis of world capitalism and Stalinism becomes sharper it will pose new problems – one will be the assimilation of members and new shifts and currents coming from the Stalinist LPP and the CCF. We have already come in contact with and have attempted to make a political collaboration with three different split-offs from the LPP: the McKean group, the French Canadian Gagnon-Dubé group, and the Yugoslav Djajic group. There will be more of these split-offs and they will be more politically approachable. New alignments are forming in the CCF which we must and will come in contact with.

Keeping in mind our numerical weakness we are required to rapidly lift the ideological level of the party, to develop our political capacity and to maintain an organizational flexibility.

* * * * *

July 20, 1949

Dear Don;

I was shocked to hear about youraccident. You read about such cases in the paper but you never expect it to happen to us. I gather from Hugh's note that it is not too serious. Of course you will be scarred for life XXXXXXX but you can turn it into a tall story...I am sure Paddy would.... you will come out of the whole thing with a little more glamour. When I was in the army, going through the jungle her husband came in the door so I.....

What have the doctors decided about the one that entered your lung? Are they going to pperate? Is it going to lay you up long.? And how are the nurses.

I hope that the operation or whatever they have to do doesn't cause you too much pain. What with the great knowledge that man has accummulated about the human body XXX surgery and medecine, and from what Hugh says of the nature of the accident I do not suppose there will be any after effect.

I see you are in good enough condition to do some reading.You know I have always dreamed of getting just a wee spot of TB or something that would put me up for a year but would not incapacitate me and would have no after effect. Boy waht reading you could do. Serious study rather. I always manage to do quite a bit of reading but the thing I never get to do is serious study. You need time for that, time which is not broken like it is in the daily round of life. I sort of envy you your position if you are going to be able to work the compensation for a while.

Why don't you try to do some seriousstudy. The SWP put out a study course on Marxist economics. It is based on Wage Labor and Capital, and Value, Price and Profit. It has a pattern of its own and has a series of questions to be answered for which it supplies the pages in the two books where if you have any trouble you will find the answers. They have also a more general one on Marxism which has a selected reading list. Do you have that two volume edition of the Collected Works of Karl Marx. That would be an ideal book to take up and try to read from cover to cover. Perhaps a little heavy ,but it is well organized and you would get a lot out of it.

If you want a diversion some afternoon how about dropping us a line. And by god take some of this time to read the best paper in Canada, with brilliant analysis of waht is going on in Canadian and world politics.... Labor Challenge...you will be able to catch up.

I would send you a basket of fruit or something but I am as usual pretty well dead broke. I am sure Hugh could rangle one and help you eat it too by dropping around to see Morris.

Take it easy but dont forget you cant stay in that soft spot forever, you have to get to work to pay your pledge.

warmest regards

Toronto August 8th/49

Dear Jean; - re Bédard

Sorry I forgot to let you know about that check but I guess the answer is fairly obvious. Yes it is already probably in Europe.

Here is the receipt for the last $35.00 (Receipted)

I see I am still unable to send you the information about that fellow Mohid. I have seen Ken only once or twice since receiving your letter and on each time during a branch meeting or some other to -do and I have forgotten to ask him about it. Will do so for sure next time I see him.

I suppose you have had a chance to read over the last issue. Really played up the CCF developments. We have mailed about 600 extra issues of this copy to CCF sympathizers in B.C.

I am quite anxious to know waht you and Murrey have to say about the last report I wrote up for the N.C. What is your opinion about super- increased fraction work and the idea of dissolution of the Vancouver branch into the CCF while maintaining the rest of the party. I am of the opinion that this is an essentail move on our part. As a matter of fact some of the Toronto branch are raising the question of the entry of the whole party, Toronto also. We will probably have a discussion in the executive tonight. Havent given it much thought... what little I have, says no. At any rate we will have to prepare something on the whole question of fraction work and the queston of entry.

Expect to do something on this when I return from my holiday. I hope that you will have a lot of thought waiting for me when I return. Have heard more from Reg which is very interesting. Will type it out on a separate page to all N.C. members. I think I told you that the Van branch turned down McAuslane's offer to Bill

Sorry that neither you nor Murray wrote up anything for the last issue of L.C. Hope you can do something for the next issue. As you can imagine I will be returning to an office full of work. It is hard enough as it is to get the paper out and we will need an article to solve the writing problem here in Toronto, all the more so for the September issue.

Hope you or Murray can take this on. I understand from Don and Hugh that Murray expressed some disapproval over the Asbestos article. This only shows me that it is essentail that you fellows give a hand here and write in an article for each issue.

Any new and interesting develops with our front organization?

Will write you on my return.

comradely

Ross

J-M Beland (2) Montreal

Fitz (gerald) = Murray D.
M = ?  E = ?

Dear [redacted] Grenier

Received both books now(Problems of Life and Patterns of Culture.)

Here is what else is out from the Toronto library

| | |
|---|---|
| ABC of Marxism Study Course | JMB |
| Communism and the Family by Kollontai | Julien |
| The Law of Biogenisis | " |
| Savage Survivals J.H. Moore | " |

Also received the package of books all written by Lenin. You had them totalled up in value to $6.45. There were two items, Left Wing Communism and the Volume XIX which were so soiled that I did not think we could put them on the shelves for sale at their list price. Cut .20 cents of Left Wing Communism and one dollar off the collected works. So have creditted the Montreal book account $5.25. The account how stand at $17.10

Received the $35 you sent on August 29 and am enclosing the receipt along with the others that you sent in. Hope you do not think there is any confusion etc over funds. M asked me how things were and I told him that generally speaking they were not so good. Then he asked me about Montreal and off-handed I said I thought that we were somewhat behind. I suppose I had in mind that just before receiving the August 5th $35 I wrote you asking if you could send any money in . He reacted [redacted] concerned about my comment on Montreal and I sort of, without [redacted] bothering to check the receipt book, brushed the matter aside.

Tomorrow morning I am dropping into the mail a batch of material for you and [redacted] to read over. An iternal bulletin of which we only have one copy, letter from Germain and an interesting report of a discussion on the glacis that took place in the SWP tops. As soon as you read them and have rushed them off to Fitz and he has read them would you mail them to P.R. I have written the address at the head of one of the documents. When you read the discussion report it would be well if you took notes. I say so because I think that we should have a rounded discussion on the resolution that the IS and IEC adopted recently on the Glacis. I had a very casual discussion with M on this resolution and his position. [redacted] He has not come to a hard and fast conclusion but he is very much in doubt as to the correctness of our position on the USSR...defence as a profoundly degenerate worker's state. He as best I could understand it classifies the glacis in the same category as the USSR. As you know the IEC resolution says that they are transitional states, not degenerate workers but if a sharp characterization is required, capitalist. The SWP discussion was very illuminating for me and I am sure will make the discussion in the Montreal group much more valuable. We should by no means write M off. I am convinced that he is by no means hardened in his ideas.

You remember how M backed down and was so conciliatory the time we had the meeting at Dion's when I was there last...I forget just this moment what the questions were but where we thought there was going to be a conflict there was a great feeling of conciliation and for compromise. While M and E were not here long and part of the time we were with other comrades of what discussion I had, I got the impression that M is not at all as sure of his positions as I had thought from you and Fitz. You know in some ways the situation in Montreal is none too good for a real exchange of ideas. The branch is a branch of leaders. Comrades who are quite

mature who are used to taking positions on questions from their own reading and thoughts; comrades who do not depend on one another so much, on the party, a branch and discussion for the development of ideas.

I think this situation has created a barrier between you, fitz and M. and a tendency to categorize M when I do not think he is at all ready to be categorized. At anyrate I think we should go out of our way to discuss with him his ideas. He is a very serious comrade and if he can be pulled up XXXX he can be very valuable to the party.

Incidently he is quite sensitive about two things....the opposition by the comrades to his staying in his room and not mixing with the Montreal population. the other-.....your attitude towards Socialisme and Barbarisme and such XIX eclectic revisionist organs. If we are going to do anything further about his continuing to isolate himself and his greater interest in the revisionist press than the Marxist I think we will have to change our tactics.

Remember when I offered M that pile of Labor Actions and he said that he had no use for them and not to bother sending them on. Well I think we have to adopt a variation of that tactic. It would be well instead of throwing the next issue or so in the dump that you would read it through thoroughly and pick out one article or so, really prepare yourself to do a withering job on it and do so with Marc. I think that he looks upon our contempt for these rags as a form of fear and inability to answer their ideas. At the same time XXX get a sub from him for the F.I. He was a trifle embarrased when I showed such suprise that he did not get it regularly. Get it through the box. The other question of his mXXXXXX coming out of his room, well, I think that XXXXXXX it would be best if we eased off but threw all kinds of opportunities his way to meet your friends and contacts, Wevricks etc. The biography of Lenin that I am sending down this next week should make an impression on him. Krupskaya repeats over and over again her and Lenin's constant concern with what the workers in the street were thinking, how they just walked the streets to hear snatches of conversation, how Lenin left the circles of the intellectuals at conferences and conventions to go down to the floor amongst the workers delegates, etc..

Glad to hear that you will be going to the coast. If you are squeezed for time between then and the time of leaving one day should be enough for us to have a serious discussion on the situation that confronts us in Vancouver. Reg hasn't said anything about what plans the comrades have made for the IWA convention. I will write him and tell him that you are coming so that he can if he thinks it necessary prepare you for coordinating anything they may have in mind. Of course the big thing is the discussion that we can have on the CCF and the left wing. I do not yet know your opinion on the suggestion of entry by the Vancouver branch. Murray wrote me a letter the other day and I have received a letter from Angus. Well we can have a rounded discussion on this question so that when you get to Vancouver you can probe the matter from every angle, we can have another discussion and then prepare some documents.

A while back I took a note of something I wanted to ask you. Looking at it now I find the content has slipped my mind but here it is. Do you know a Jack Shaw who once organized a strike in the Angus shops was subsequently an activist in the IPP and CSU but pulled out apparently disillusioned when Sullivan sold out to the shipowners? From this I gatherXX that at the time I thought it would be a good idea if you looked him up and saw what he was thinking now.

One of the Prince Rupert comrades will be a delegate to the TLC Convntion in Calagary. Bert G could have made it but negotiations are opening up just a few days previously so he did not think he should go. I dont know of anyone else.

in the party who will be going. From your connenctions in Montreal is there anyone going that this comrade could latch onto?

[redacted] Last night just when I got as far as the top of this page I was going to tell you that from all appearances here the Stalinists were not going to put a fight up at the TLC convention. Bert G told me last week that a real party trade union liner , big shot in his local and elected as a delegate to the convnetion is not going, due to the pressure of union work at the Tribune [redacted] print shop, he works there. When the Toronto [redacted] council came to elect its delegates, the Stalinists had a candidate who could have easily got in on split votes but the Stalinist bloc did not attend that session. I see by this mornings paper that the CSU has already pulled out of the TLC [redacted] Salasberg in his last column was very gentle in his attitude to poor misguided Percy Bengough. So here they are, after correctly pointing out that it was around the fight over the CSU that the struggle against the trade union bureau cracy was going to unfold and that this fight was the fight against redbaiting, for internal democracy and Canadian t U autonomy ,,,,,,in the interests of all this they are pulling out.

We will have to do a job on the CSU [redacted] leadership for the coming issue of the paper. How about you (and) or [redacted] taking this on? You are in the best position to do it, much better than I am. We should make it a powerful exposure of their whole traitorous policy during the strike. The only thing that we have exposed them for was their deal made at the Victoria convention of last year. We have never dealt with the conciliator of theirs, etc.

The copy should be here in the office Tuesday morinig. That gives you until Monday night to mail it. If you cannot possibly handle it, either you or [redacted] let me know in that mail as [redacted] we will have to write it here, somehow.

There were several other odds and ends but I had better get to work on this issue of the paper. Will be seeing you anyway before the IWA convention.

revolutionary greetings

Ross

Ross

I see a coming issue of the F/ is going to contain an article taking Confrontation to pieces — it will be good for M

Have written to Ross re articles in L.C. by mtl comrades + told him that we would arrange to send something regularly - G.

September 26, 1949

Windsor

Dear Comrades;

Glad to hear that you are putting on a bit of a subscription campaign. Hope you received the extra copies alright and the sub cards. It would be well if one of you would go through the cards and mark out Twice Monthly and [illegible] 12 issues that appears on the portion that you hand to the subscriber.

Probably be a little tougher to get subs at this time of the year. Things are pretty quiet. There are no by-elections out your way are there. However since you have all had some expereince at sub work and epereinced politicos I am sure we can get a considerable number. How about really going to town on the fellows you know in the various locals and the gang that hangs around the beer-hall. We do not have very many considering the number of persons that you know. Sell them to anyone regardless of what you think of their political possibilities.

Can you send in an article for the next issue of the paper [illegible] something on some Windsor development. Peferably a trade union story as we are always hard up for good trade union material. But of course if there is anything else taking place that you think will boe of interests to our readers send it along. Don is a very good writer and with the experience and knwoledge that two of you have of the Windsor labor movement it should be no difficulty at all to send us one item for each issue. It will round out the paper and give us a lever in the Windor area. I would like your contribution if you have one here in the office by October 6 or 7.

It would be a very good idea to put the question of waht will we send for the next issue of the paper of the agenda of the meeting a week or so prior to the deadline. It would also be a good ideato have a discussion in the branch of each issue of the paper as it come out. It would be good if all our comrades could become more conscious of the paper as the most effective builder of the party and its spokesman.

What do you think of the objective we set for Windsor in the Party Building Fund Drive? I know Toronto is going to have difficulty in reaching her quota and no doubt Vancouver will have some difficulty also. However I think that you should be able to handle yours. Tomnto has accepted her quota. I think that you, [illegible] unlike other points in a better position than during previous campaigns. While it may appear to be a trifle formal since we have only four comrades in the branch noetheless I think it would be best if one of the comrades were struck off to handle the campaign. His responsiblity would be to see that we really go over the list of persons whomme think at all likely to donate and to see that someone assumes the responsiblity of overing the various persons as soon as possible. This can be good party building work. It gives us a real opportunity to [illegible] find out just how close varous persons we are in contact with and working on are to our party. No some no matter how small should be sneezed at. [illegible] It would seem to me that we have a nice

nice little list of persons who can be approcahced in Windsor.

Havent heard much about just waht perspective of work has been lined up by the branch and no doubt we will be able to have a more frutiful discussion when you come in for the week-end but you might have some prior discussion. Here are a few ideas. I think it would be very valuable for the party to have M in the CCF. He is unable to operate as an open party member. He has already considerable prestige in CCF circles from past associations. Even if the Windsor club is a very poor one at this time and even if we thought that it had no possibility of improvement which is not at all the case , we need to keep in close contact with this movment. To know what the various currents in this movement are and so forth. Besides M has no other avenue of work. open to him. Memebership in the CCF doesnt mean necessarily that he devote anyreal time to the movement if it appears at this time that we would gain little profit from him doing so. How much time and waht we will do will have to be determined by an inside knowledge of the situation and of future developments in the CCF.

From all recent reports it seems certain that the CCF has closed to door on H and DD. But waht about DB. Should he go into the CCF? or is there a CCYM? To go into the CCF doesnot mean that we would lose him in so far as party work is concerned. He could do sub work for Labor Challenge. The chance that he would come across a CCF activist in sub work as a very slim one. He would not be able to distribute the paper at union meetings or CCF meetings and that is about all. Just because he is seen with H and DDdoesnt make him a Trotskyist. Ehn conducting a class presents a possible problem that is if we publisize the class very widely. If we invite only a select few such as that CCFer who is quite close to us then I do not see that this even presents a barrier. The first classes do not have to take on a hard Trotskyist party building line anyway. They can give the Marxist approach to world events or fundamental world problems without sharply posing our party. They can be conducted in a warm social atmosphere so that before they know it the contacts will be wanting to work in wahtever organizations they are in to advance our ideas. We would not pull any CCFer we picked up out of the CCF even if we had the opportunity. I think it is possible for us to have a class conducted by Don and strike off Don for CCF work at the same time. All it would mean that the class approach would be more general such as the one that Murray conducted when he was at DeHaviland and working in the CCF but puting across the Trotskyist line.

Far from thinking that the results in the campaign for elections of the CCl convention delegates were bad and a blow at our prestige. I am of the opinion that they were pretty good. After all this is the first time that we have run for any post such as this taken on a general vote of Union members. The issues are not any too clear to the memebers as a whole. It would seem to me that to have a good chance in such an election one would have to be really well known or to have a real machine behind you. Who drew up the program card? All of you together? I know there is a great shrotage of room but it would have been well if we could have had something on an all-out struggle against the anti-labor laws. On the whole the entire thing seems to me to have been very profitable.

See you all on the week-end

Fraternally

-Marie Bédard, Mtl

September 27, 1949

(French La Vérité)

Dear Jean;

Enclosed with this note you will find a copy of La Vérité that has been air mailed to us and a copy of a statement on Jugoslavia by the SWP.

La Vérité contains a statement by the International Secretariat addressed to Stalinist workers throughout the world on the significance of the anti-Tito campaign. They ask that all sections reproduce it in their press.

To do this I need a translation. I am sending you the SWP statement for it appears in large part to be a translation of the document. It will be of aid to you(meaning Montreal) in preparing the translation. I could translate it but it seems to me to be a terrible waste of man-power when we have such talent along that line down there.

Would you either do the job yourself or have someone do it as soon as possible. I would like to have it by the 4th of October if at all possible. It should be no real job for you for if the SWP statement does follow it closely [redacted] in many parts you can just clip those parts out and paste them onto the rest of the copy.

Those parts you have to translate, would you have them typed out triple spaced with 20—80 margins.

I had intended to "demand" that you(again meaning Montreal) line up something else for this coming issue. But this has to be done and can you handle anything else with this and the meeting besides? See what can be done anyway. We could do with a report and analysis of the Catholic Syndicate convention. Or possibly better still the tramway fare increase and the meeting.

Willl write tomorrow. I want to get this in your hands so that you can see that we get moving on it right away.

comradely

Ross

I see that the document will take a hell of a lot of room but I suppose we will have to publish it in toto.

October 7, 1949

- Marie Bédard, McM

Dear Jean;

Have been tied up the last few days trying to get all the papers marked up to date and as much copy into the printer before the week-end. The Windsor gang are coming in tonight so I know that there wont be much done this week-end.

I follow the Tribune very closely and have seen nothing about you in it at all. Have just checked the last three issues and there is no mention of you . We always get the Ontario edition here. Is that the one you pick up on Montreal newsstands? There was an item on the Tramways fare increase but that was three weeks ago and covered only the $2 bill trick. Of course the Trotskyists are being yanked into the Tito fracas and the Hungarian frame-up. Will certinaly le t you know when anything come up .

Thanks for the trouble you went to with the IS statement to the Communist Party workers. I should have looked it over closely to see if it was the SWP statement. What must have mislead me was the fact that the SWP docuemnt came in several days before the air-mail copy of La Verite with the instructions from the IS. I think we should publish it as it is---that is the La Verite version. I dont see that it is necessary for us to put in any immediate Canadian example of our defence of the civil rights of the Stalinists. There really isnt room and after all it is going to be stated in our paper that it is the statement of the International Secretariat

Have received Murray's article on the fare protest meeting. Thanks very much, it is a big aid,as only one of the Toronto comrades is writing for the paper this issue. I think your idea on how to handle an article for the paper every issue is a good one . Hope we can carry it out into prctice.

Re the meeting on the fare increase;

I see from Murray that you will be having a group meeting in the next few days. No doubt this will be one of the big questions of discussion. Well here is my contribution to the discussion.

I have typed my contribution on separate sheets of paper so that it wont get mucked up with the rest of the small talk here. Will you read it to the branch. Of course it is no polished contribution but it contains a few ideas which may be valuable for the discussion.

As I say , I would really like to hear more about this Binder Haddow affair. I dont know about Binder but Haddow seems to me to be one of the big party men What the hell's is he doing in a conference with the Trotslyists, can they only rally fifty persons out to a meeting?

→ as will work out in Toronto.

Well! here we go again with this ~~[illegible]~~ refugee question. I am enclosing a letter from Morris Stein which is pretty well self explanatory. To the best of my knowledge we cannot do anything to help this Albanian comrade other than suggest that he just come over and then stay illegally. Do you know of any angles. Can we make any connections with persons who do know---let us say our polish friends's friends.

Last time I spoke to the authourities they told me that they do not consider Albanians D.P.'s and I understand that ~~[illegible]~~ there is a closed door policy on France, on top of this only immediate realtives can be brought in.

Would you see what can be done there---and let me know as soon as possible

Received the books that Julien had

Will be sending a very interesting report out as soon as I get the paper out.....this Wednesday or Thursday. Interesting developments in the CCF. Some of it you will see in the next issue.

warmest regards

Ross

Ross

and we are not in much of a position to support him or find him employment. But of course even then these conditions would probably be better than those he is living in now

Surely by willing to sign forms. But Lou says it is useless! Can always try!

October 8, 1949

New York

Benson (SWP)

Dear Ruth;

Thanks for impressing Sylvia that we have no room for the pamphletz up here. I shipped them on the other day with considerable relief...not just because we will have more room but fire is also a fear I have of thus place.

With regards to the payment for them. I gather from Sylvia's last note that I was not to clear about it all. Would you talk it over with her with this information at hand;

| | |
|---|---|
| Total agreed price was 155.00 | |
| That shipment that was just received (1500copies) worth since that has been received she should send me in the mail payment for it. I would think a check is ok | 77.50 |
| latest shipment(750 copies) to be paid for when arrives I think the bank would want this handledthis way | 38.75 |
| mailed in small parcels to branches(750) worth but to be creidtted to our Pioneer account | 38.75 |
| | 155.00 |

There is a sentence in her letter I do not understand;" The amount left after deucting $38.75 will be 61.90." unless it means that we owed Pioneer the sum of $100.65. and that the $38.75 credit brings it down to 61.90. It is of course quite possible that we owed that amount as I have been very negligent with the account due to exchange difficulties and other work that has to be done.

I am enclosing a bank money order made out to Joe. Would you cash it,keep $ for yourself(in payment for the mats you have made for us) and turn the other five over to Morris. to go to the IS.

As for Ritch-Bitch I suppose we can do without them for a while until Freddie manages to get around to them.

Thanks for the clippings for Barry. Dont know if we will be able to handle the article that you suggest in the issue as we are going to carry the IS statement of the Yugoslav crisis. I see you are carrynig it in the F.I. The IS instructed us to do so, its a big issue and a popular one so we are going ahead. Needless to say it takes a terrific section of the paper and we are going to be tight with other assignemnet.

Jean Laplante is Paul Kane. Havent had anything from Montreal for at least 6 issues of the paper. The same with Vancouver. However this issue we had a KAMAR barrage, one from each of them. This would be the issue of all issues when we get something. However we are going to carry them despite shortage of space...they are quite good.

You scored on the XXXXXXX battle run around but I am not quite so willing to concede on the hot air. More heat appled to a bag of hot air makes it collapse or possibly a better word burst. I know Ill have to watch that stuff...the one about the CSU was really funny (in the previous issue)

My dear...splinter woodworkers union was absaultely intentional just like Green-backed Hall forces.

Now on the XXX headline type and other tpye chosen for the front page heads. I did what you complain about intentionally. I purposely did not want the Stalinists and the CSU article to take the page over despite the fact that we made it the headline. By the time that we wrote that and were circ lating it the convention was wall und underway and towards the end of the month well into the past. I wanted to give it the top position because it was the best we had for that position at the same time I wanted to play it down . At the same time the CoL convention was the big issue. Delegates were being elected and motions sent to the convention when we were writing the paper and stil when we were distributing it. I did not want to give it the top position as it was a feature type of article, not as sensational as the Stalinists and the CSU so I gave it bold type, made it stand out. Then it seemde to me that the CCF edit did not need bold head as it was promient in the paper by the big slab to took up and its position on the page.

So What I tried to do wwas to editorialize the position of the articles and at the same time the weight of the type used. Is this not done . In my opinion to have given stronger type to the CSU together with its position on the page, the terrific photo would have made it the most prominent development in world affairs. XXXXXXXXXXXXtNext time you have a chance give us your opinion on this will you

The XXX ad...well it was the same old stuff. Rush rush rush. Ed and Bill were both away on holidays. Ralph was the only man on the stone. The CT was my mistake in so far as the abbreviations...saw the T and the fact that despite XXXXXXX my request that they cut off the cent signs on some of the items they went through but I did not want to stop the presses as at that time it was touch and go as to whether we would get it off that week or the next. All the rest the comrades hear about in a special meeting we held last week to criticize the various contributions that had been coming in the last two or three issues.

This special meeting gave us a chance to have a real analysis of the contributions ...we dont have time as you will recall at the editorial meetings. I think it was very profitable.

On the CCF...I personally favor an immediate entry in Vancouver and very extensive fraction work in Toronto. We could carry on the paper and one comrades in Vancouver could stay outside to use the paper at the discretion of the branch. However the Vancouver branch is opposed to anbentry, Murray favor an entrist orientation but must have a convention and prefers to wait till the srping the unfolding depression and its crystallization of the left currents. In view of the fact that this tactic is a difficlt one and our cadres are not very experienced, even thoight it may mean a possible lost opportunity I think we will have to wait

Would like to take time out to give a real picture of recent developments but I dont think I can make it right now. Tell you what I will do ...have been getting hell for not ~~talking~~ sending Vancouver reports on waht is going on and have tried to meet this pressure by sending a letter to N.C. members of recent developments what one another thinks of my proposals etc. Will make and extra one out for you. Dont have any of the last ones around except file copies as I sent a set to the I.S.

warmest regards

Ross

October 15, 1949

Dear Murray;

Just a short note in answer to your personal letter of somewhile back and to thank you for the last contribution to the paper.

I guess I have said about all I can say on the tram fare meeting in the letter I sent Jean. Jean mentioned about Haddow and Binder. I see you say you will be sending more on the meeting this week. Good, as I want to get that circular letter we have been sending out to N.C. members. away next week if possible and I am sure there is some important material in your report.

However I must say I dont see how we ever got into attempting to hold such a meeting as the one proposed. Jean makes some remarks at the end of his letter on the meeting, about the times we are living in, much as if the whole thing was quite a suprise to him, as if he had never heretofore realized that general conditions in the labor movement are not too favourable for us.

I see now that most of the letter is on the question of entry. I dont think we nedd to worry about building a split of liquidation in the party. The whole question has arisen here around the developments of a left wing in B.C. and repercussions across the country, an attempt to contact them and give them revolutionary direction. The moral is quite good in the party in so far as this is concerned...there is no mood to dump the party and use the CCF as an excuse. The attitude of everyone is quite different...how can we build the party. I am, as I said in my letter opposed to an entry in Toronto but strongly in favor in Vancouver. The left is too isolated to B.C. and our paper is too important to let it drop. We are in no position to come in contact with anything in the CCF that would enable us to put out a paper in the CCF for a hell of a long time (except perhaps in B.C. and there because of the nature of the left it would be such a hodge potch as to not in any sense take the place of L.C.) One person could stay out and circulate L.C. in B.C. However the Vancouver comrades take to my mind a hopelessly ridiculous position (if Whitney reports right) since this tactic is such a difficult one in my opinion it would be the height of folly for the rest of the party to put the heat on Vancouver and force them by its majority to enter. A convention would not solve this matter. I am resigned to the fact that we will miss the boat on this development, not completely of course because I think Vancouver is now making an attempt to put some comrades into the CCF out there.

But we must in my mind prepare the party now for entry in the future. The party must have the perspective of entering the CCF in the future. We started it with Barry's article on the tactic of entry. I think it would be well to do some work on Vancouver's ideas in the bulletin. I will be getting to work on this as soon as I can.

We are at last starting to get someplace with trying to build a fraction in the CCF. Ken and Sonia are attending one CCYM club which appears to be fair. Don M is going to go to a club which has in its membership the provinical president of the CCYM, a leftist who dropped down twice to the office in the past week and bought $7.50 worth of books. It has been very difficult to get this far because of Joe. He has been opposing the whole thing all along. Not the individual steps but the thing as a whole. While he has now lost any influence amongst the comrades aside from personal (and that includes joyce, Sonia and Ken) he still turns the branch into an uproar

with slanderous stupid charges and re marks.

The difficulties died down a bit after we steam-rollered him on his quasi-Stalinism which was revealed around the Buck in Trinity question and the CCF as the political arm of labor. I say steamrollered him because we did not convince him on anything. He was just overwhelmed after he took internal educational after internal education and paralysed the branch.

You are mistaken, he does not consciously have a CCF orientation. While he is part and parcel of the CCF leadership in Packinghouse( He very grandly informed the branch a few weeks ago that he is chief stewart at the Paton road plant, he is on the plant wide grievance committee, on the executive [illegible] he still rejects the CCF as the political arm of labor. At a trade union meeting of a while back he said in the process of a discussion that the CCF was the politcial arm of labor, I asked him if I heard him right and he repeated it. It was let go. But just after the elections to the executive Barry unknown to me challenged Joe as trade union director if he did not accept the position that the CCF was the politcal arm of labor. He mentioned that I had told him what Joe had said and asked if it were true. Joe repled that he had not changed his position that the CCF was only a political arm of labor.

He is opposed to the Toronto work in the CCYM and CCF. Not on any principled basis. He has voted for all the practical moves involved but take for example a meeting of two weeks ago. After we had a series of reports from Ken Sonia and Don he charged that we did not know where we were going that the whole things was "adventurism". Joyce, obviously under his influence, heatedly charged that we were in an underhanded manner liquidating the party, making an entry. This came up about two months ago and profoundly upset Don and Ed, who have been struck off to go around the CCF, because they suffer from doubts as to just what they should do, conduct themselves in the CCF. We had an educational and settled it alright but here it is again.

At a branch meeting a few weeks ago I remarked that I was suprised that he had taken the chief stewart job without consultation with the party, without saying whether I approved or not of the job in itself. I referred the matter to the coming trade union meeting. Here Joe made an attempt to establish some kind of autonomy for the trade unionist in the party. Again we dont have any trade union program." Trade unionists have to free from the party." All the comrades were agreed to switch the whole discsussion then to the relationship of the individual to the party. Joe revealed here what he has always had ,a contempt for the party. The party does not exist in his mind outside of myself.— He is now trying to give it some kind of principled character

What makes it so rotten is his method of conduct. He used last internal education to put forward this idea again, to attack those comrades who went to UPWA to work and did not stay, etc etc. The educational was supposed to be on the party's trade union work, and perspectives. He says he has principled differences with (again with me, the party) on trade union work. But the principles involved when they do show themselves he does not consider principles. Again he has principled differences on the question of CCF work. Well I moved that he give an educational but I know what it will be, just crap, and fury.

Ken came back quite triumphantly that you approved Joe on the executive. You are mistaken, he wrecked the last executive. Vern and Barry are so sick of his shit that I had a hard time convincing them to go on it. There is no doubt that Joe is one of the most able comrades but it isn't settled there. He has contributed nothing to the party for the last year, on the contrary he has played a completely disruptive role. In a case like this it is better to have a cipher on the executive.

(ends)

October 19, 1949

Windsor

Dear Comrades;

By now you have received the October issue of the paper and have had a good chance to look it over. I think you will agree that it is an excellent issue to put into the hands of every Stalinist possible. Do you think that we could put over a distribution in Windsor.? Are there any meetings taking place within the next week or so. I suppose there is certain to be one on the 7th of November. If there are no meetings what do you think of the idea of doing a house to house distribution in the Yugoslav district. I have the impression that there is an area around Morris' that is or was quite solidly Yugoslav Stalinist. I remember Don and I tried to do sub work there and I saw many portraits of Tito in homes.

Let me know what you decide so we can get the papers out to you.

Would you return the other bundle that you asked me to send somewhile back. We could make good use of it for CCF mailings. Incidentlly we scored again with the CCF mailings. We got another six subs from mailing 500 copies of the September issue to B.C. names.

Also would Don write what books he wants in the Modern Library. Someone else wants some and I would like to make the oder all at once before the month is out.

all the best

Ross

October 22, 1949

Dear Don: (Dotzauer)

Received the subs alright. What do you mean "I guess it is not very good", 10 subs three people in an hour and a half. I think it is very good. It is every bit as good as we were averaging in last springs campaign here in Toronto, and much better than they were doing in Vancouver. If you can do this several times, far from being dissapointed I will be very much elated. It will be a real gain if we can get thirty or forty subs in Windsor, and it is certainly a real experience for our comrades to get the subs. ...you learn how to present our ideas

I guess your reaction to this excellent achievement flows from the mood that Eleanor has put you in.

Glad to hear that you wined and dined Kutcher. He is certainly doing a terrific job. I gahter from some of the comrades that he has aged under the strin and is in considerable agony from his wounds. He certainly has a lot of guts. I am sure he got a kick from the badge.

I hope everything is going along smoother since you returned. Particularly since both you and Hugh are excellent types. ..and we need both of you badly for wahtever you can give the movement. You know sometmies particularly when you live with or are thrust on one another it is difficult to hold a balanced appreciation of one another. You know in many ways both Hugh and you are very much alike. There is no one in the party who is capable of greater sacrifice for the movement or is more closely t ed to the movement than either one of you. It is true that Hugh has many faults but so have you and every one of us. But we have to see the strong points and these outweigh everything else. It seems to me that much of our difficulty has arisen from things said in anger, statements that I know are not seriously meant. I hope that our little agreement will give us a chance to sit back and then see on antoehr in our true light---and shortly that we will once again find a really satisfactory working arrangement.

I meant to drop you a line about that book you loaned me by Yipsilon. Well it is a book that is worth reading alright. It gives you a bit of an insight into the personalities of the greatest gathering of revolutionists that we have yet witnessed---the Russian Bolshevike. The whole first party of the book dealing with reminiscenses of the early days of the C.I. is very interesting and supplements a great deal of what I have already read. But while it gives a true and accurate picture of the degeneration of the revolution and the nature of the Stalin clique, Trotsky's struggle (this is very sketchy) the latter part of the book, its positive side ends up in the camp of liberal democracy. True in a rather subtle and muted way but the authors supported the last war as a war between democracy( and fascism. It is worth reading but I would not loan it around except to our own comrades. There is some worthwhile anti-Stalinist documentation that make it of reference value.

I dont think I told you waht I thought about Malaquais' book World Without a Visa. I thought it was excellent, very exciting, well written. If there was any fault with it I think that some of the characters all of which were interesting did not seem to be real flesh and blood persons. Many of them were caricatures.

Well it is quite a mess this Eleanor affair; by no means hesitate to call on me for what little I can do. Not that I am any expert at affairs of the heart. I hesitate to say much now. However I do not see why you "should be ashamed" for waht you call

act

the [redacted] criminal and un-Bolshevik of telling her to get out. If two persons are not getting along with one another but one of them is content to continue on in this unsatisfactory basis and the other not I don't see any alternative but for the one to ask the other to leave or leave himself. When you broke up you made some kind of agreement on your common properties, she was not out on the street or aynt ing like that so------I see nothing wrong. If that was the situation I see no cause for shame.

She is not suing you for support, asking damages or anything like that ? If she just wants the divorce it would seem to me to be futile to oppose it in anyway. I can well understand you still being in love with her and perhaps a tendency to feel that with the divorce there is absolutely no hopefor[redacted]get-together again. But after all this would be illusory. Her request for this scrap of paper only [redacted] writes finish to something which was obvisouly finished anyway. No one every really held onto anyoneelse with a peice of paper.

Well let me know how you make out

comradely

Ross

RDW Dawson records

E4 1944-57 MTL

October 23, 1949

(see over p.2)

Marie Bédard, Mtl.

Dear Jean;

I think it would be an excellent idea , if we can arrange it, to have me come down to speak to the McGill's student union. I hope we can arrange it, almost anytime would be suitable. If we cannot because of lack of real contact with the students this fall, we certainly should be able to pull it off after the elections ,that is if we do decide to run.

Re the meeting of the League; Do you think we could arrange a discussion on the Tito-Stalin conflict. This would be a real live-wire issue with the various persons whom we are most hopeful of working on....and I am sure that there would be considerable general interest at the same time. Would it be possible to get Binder, Gagnon and yourself or Murray on the platform for this. What does Gagnon have to say about the whole Tito development. Wasn't one of the keystones in his political edifice the idea that everything is alright in the world Stalinist movement only here in Canada the IPP has fallen into the hands of some fellows who are not really following Stalin's line. The Yugoslav legation has not answered our request that they should provide us or put us in touch with a speaker. It was hardly likely they would do so but the WEL might be able to get a speaker from them. And even if you could only get him on the platform it would be a good thing to provide the Titoists a chance to speak to the Montreal workers.

I suppose you have read Binders little contribution to the constitutional question in this week's Tribune. Quite a mess, hodge-potch. Cant seem to make up his mind whether it is progressive or not, whether it doesnt really mean anything or whether it is a long step in Canada's break-away from Br. towards Wall Street, whether it is a red herring to detract the workers from their real problems etc. I am not so fussy that the WEL should provide a platform for a former CCF-Bloc Populaire and Laurendeau. Of course you my be able to get someone else who can give it a slighlly more balanced and correct point of view. I t would have been good if we had been able to get Scott, not so much for ideas, although even here he would improve the atmosphere, but for prestige. I suppose Blackshaw would take a good position on this question though.

I have written Gabriel that we have got moving on this immigration affair. Hope you can find time to shove the whole thing through as quickly as possible.

We seem to have bad luck with all our visitors. Marc, Edith, Ellen, Ruth. Can it be that the climate is not too favourable in this fair countree. I guess there is nothing we can do about it.

Very anxious to see what you have to say on the problem of Fr Canada. Not that I think we really have to have a rounded and fully finished position on the question. I think we could get along alright for sometime on the same basis that the American comrades are getting along with the negro question

How is the money situation down there...the monthly sustaining and now on top of this the financial drive! Hope we can really do a job on Ken Alice Louis and company. I hate like hell to miss them even if we dont get any too much. We want to keep them in the habit of paying us something every once in a while. Of course I hope we can really put the squeeze on them. It is going to be a little tougher this year.

over (ends)

Comradely

T. Ross Dawson

P. 2

"Pioneer (SWP, New York) is publishing "3rd International After Lenin" at about 2.50 would like to know how many Montreal would be able to handle immediately upon publication."

XXX

Oct. 1949

225 Grenadier Road, Toronto 3, Ont.

Dear Comrade Genora; (SWP, Detroit) re. Windsor RWP

I wonder if you would do me and as a matter of fact our movement a small personal favor.

I wonder if you could arrange to find time within the next week or so to drop over to Windsor and permit Don Potzert to unburden himself on your broad shoulders.

Eleanor is taking him to court for a divorce. As you probably know he is still in love with her and he is considerably upset. He badly needs some advice and there is no one aside from you and I ( he says in a letter) to whom he feels he can turn.

Unfortunately this comes at a time when there is a bit of a crisis in his relations with the movement. No doubt you are aware that there is a personal conflict between Don and Hugh. A few weeks this conflict became very sharp. They were both into Toronto a few weeks ago and I believe we came to a temporary solution...the solution was that they should attempt to have as little contact with one another except through the party.

Both of these affairs coming together caused me to have some concern. I would be greatly relieved if you could make the trip and would be only too glad to cover any expenses it might cost you. I know that these things are rather distasteful but they are all in the days work and you should be an old hand at it.

If you are able to go I would prefer that you said nothing about my writing you and that the visit appear to be as casual a one as possible. I might say that he has told me on numerous occasions that when he returned from netting me in the army to work on his own in Windsor that he would never have stayed in the movment but for you and your influence.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

E4 1944-57 MIL

Letter fragment, 2 pp, From RD to I-M Bédard (?) re: (WEL) Murray D. date Nov-Dec 1949?

Murray enclosed a few comments on the meeting along with his article ; together with your comments I have a a fair picture of the preparations that were made for the meeting and the immediate results.

You say that the meeting was no success; Murray agrees and you add that the results were characteristic of the period we are in at present.

My first reaction when I saw your report of how many were present was that considering the period we are living in it was an astounding success. To be frank, and this is not at all in the tone of "I told you so", I was dumfounded when I heard about the whole thing, the subject of the meeting its character and what was being done to publicize it. The whole action was not at all in keeping with how I thought we evaluated the present general state of the workers and the tasks that the Educational League was going to set itself.

I did not intervene at all as the whole affair was well underway by the time I heard of it. Besides I know that while we are the spinal column of the League I know that we are not all of it and I thought it might have been an action thrust upon us by the other persons we have around us. Then again I did not know precisely what the reaction of the workers and their organizations was to the fare gouge.

But from Murray's article, comments and your comments I seems to me that there was absolutely no basis for the holding of such an ambitious affair. That either we made an error in our evaluation of the general politcial situation in Canada and Montreal and the tasks that we set the League or we were forced into the affair by others of less experience. There is no suggestion of the latter being the case.

From my evaluation of the general situation in Montreal and Canada, gained to a considerable extent from your experiences there in the last few years, I never ever visualized that we would set the League such a task as we did on this ocassion. The whole thing was an agitational action....the very issue is one that requries immediate action and it was handled by the League in this manner..monstrous hall, leaflets, spot announcements etc.

Murray reports that none of the workers organizations, the unions and the political parties did anything to fight the increase. That the workers felt so helpless that they were unable to really make it hot for their leaders and all the other politicos, CCF and LPP, failed to bestir themselves. And here we are a little handful of persons, aside from one or two persons without any influence in the workers movment, calling upon the workers to by-pass their mass organizations, to rally to our side and----do what. In recognistion that we have no influence in the workers movements we are unable to even hint at or suggest a line of action.

A mass political party could call and effectively hold a mass protest meeting on such an issue in the perspective audiences' knowledge that it was a rallying of the forces for an action. Who would come down to the WEL, an unknown organization, to just sit and hear some protest speeches. Our own name belies the action...an educational league.

In my opinion we should have a serious discussion on what the persepctive of our forces in Montreal is and what the perspective of this group we

lead is. This meeting and the whole scheme seems to me to be an example of fire-cracker politics, attempting to pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.

I think that the League should and can only be an educational league, addressing itself to the more advanced workers in Montreal, CCFers Stalinists, Gagnonists and wh at few unattached radicals there are there. It should bring in radical films to show, it should have round table discussions, debates, bring in speakers on issues of moment to the above elements. A debate on Tito-Stalin would seem to me to be a natural for the next activity in the next month. We should put ads in the papers, get a small hall and be very pleased if we get 40 persons out.

Even the League to my mind is a big experiment, even on this basis. The only thing that makes it a feasible task to set ourselves is the existence of the Gagnon group plus this handful of unattached radicals that we have come across. In my opinion however the Gagnon group is essential to its success. This was also my opinion on the publication of the paper La Verite....the Gagnon group

If the Gagnon group freezes us then I would say at once let's get down to some basic work here in Montreal. Let's start a class on Marxism or and advanced class on an application of Marxism to the world scene. Let's get a couple of guys down from the shop to attend it, a couple of CCFers that one of our comrades in that movment has come across. Lets get 30 or 40 subs to Labor Challenge from amongst the various persons we know.

Perhaps not very inspiring but in the long run it is going to pay off. When the general situation improves we will then be in a position to take advantage of it instead of breaking our heartsm wasting our energies in actions which will bring no profit

To my mind this whole question of how we are to work in Montreal is involved in the question of French Canada. I have had the impression for sometime now that some comrades are of the opinion that the movement is going to be built in some fundamentally different way in Quebec than elsewhere...that for some reason we are not going to have to do the plodding work that Vancouver and Toronto are doing. That because of the nature of the French Canadian working class we are somehow going to be able to jump from waht we cannot even call in numbers a party branch to a mass movement of a broad kind.

In other ways the meeting was very profitable. I see the Gagnonists are closer to us, distributing the learlets etc. It is also most interesting to see that the Stalinists rallied their forces for the affair. You say instructed their members to appear and they only constituted about 50.... This information together with Binder's enquiry as to whether LPPers could come in is really interesting. I would like to hear more of this matter. your thoughts on the significance of this meeting and their attendance. It may require a new orientation for the League, waht's happening in the LPP.

By the way can we get any subs to the paper from the persons who are coming around the League. My impression is that any workers who are sufficonently advanced for us to talk to, read or can read English. Until we have a sufficent base to publish La Verite again I think we can do a much more effective job with Labor Challenge.

November 15, 1949

Herb Henderson

Dear Brother Henderson-

Thanks very much for your very fine contribution to our press.

It will be a considerable aid in keeping Labor Challenge rolling off the press at a time when it is no mean feat. The bureaucrats and witch hunters are riding high on the backs of a temporarily confused and passive working class but underneath a great storm is brewing. We are convinced that Labor Challenge, if today it has no mass base and has difficulty in carrying on, is nonetheless destined to play a great role in sharpening the consciousness of the workers and pointing the way.

We are as yet small nevertheless as you can see from our last issue we are already having great influence on the CCF rank and file who under the right swing of their leaders are looking and searching for the answers. That vast edifice that the Kremlin has built up and that for so long has cost so much and overawed so many is being profoundly shaken up in its clash with the aspiration of the European workers.

We are living in a period of great ferment, of soul searching and the birth pangs of a new world. Your contribution will aid us in our efforts to assure that the delivery when it comes will have all the aids of the science of revolutionary marxism.

fraternally

Ross Dowson

November 15, 1949

Windsor, Ont

Dear Comrades-

(Henderson)

Enclosed you will find a letter that I have written for Herb Anderson. I dont know for sure if this is the type you have in mind. If you think it is a little too educational, fatherly, in tone dont give it to him and ask me for another, with some suggestions from you.

I am enclosing a batch of reciepts. I should have added up the money when you gave it to me Hugh for there is a mistake in it.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| In the envelope there was | 96.00 | in bills |
| | 10.60 | in US change |
| | .03 | in Cdn pennies |
| | 106.63 | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| On the envelope you had written | Hugh | 10.10 | Amer |
| | Bert | 1.00 | |
| | Hend | 10.00 | |
| | Mat | 20.00 | |
| | Don D | 30.00 | |
| | M.B. | 20.00 | |
| | Monthly | 25.00 | pledge for Oct. |
| | | 116.10 | |

So you can see that the envelop had $ 9.47 less in it than you had figured out on the front of it. You will notice that I have made the reciept out for $51(Bert, M.B., Hend, Mat.) and another for 31.63 allowing 1.00 for exchange on the 10.60 in U.S. funds.

You had better write soon and tell me how you wnat the $31.63 entered in the books, financial drive or what.

It is good to see that we are getting a little help from persons like Henderson and Lore even though in the financing of the party and paper it doesnt amount ot a great deal. It brings these persons much closer to the party and at the least to be more Labor Challenge conscious.

I see that our sub work is paying off in the case of Getty. Yes it is impossible to carry on sub work from door to door but it would be a good thing if we can keep getting the odd sub from various fellows we meet in the beer parlour and in the shop regardless of their present political possibilities . Who knows waht ideas of ours these fellows may pass around when in discussions with other persons who may be worth while in a more immediate sense. This morning a fellow who is by no means a good contact of ours phoned in 5 subscriptions to the paper....he apparently picked them up in the shop he works in

Hope you received the Yugoslav list alright. We mailed it. Congratulations of the Tim Buck meeting distribution. We were not at all as successful. The police stopped us from covering the Massey Hall meeting and even took Myer and I up to the police station to get the ruling from the desk sargent. I tried to convince them to

let us carry it out but no go. There is a local by-law that prohibits it or at least requires a permit...I am not sure which. They treid to tell us that you could get a permit. We will have to try to do so next time.

Havent been able to work any other angles on [illegible] contacting Yugoslavs. Pete Grebelis has been given the freeze by both sides. The former Editor of the Stalinist Yugoslav press who I once had a talk with has left for New York. The Titoists are publishing a paper there for North American Yugoslavs.

Don D's books- Had what has been filled on the order all wrpapped up for Hugh to take along but he forgot. We have received [illegible] three of the Modern Library books so far. Have been [illegible] unsucessful in locating the album of records but there is one place that has yet to give us a call. Will mail some of them now and the rest when we get them.

Why dont you write up a short report on the housing question in Windsor and the meeting where you fellows hit the floor for flying squads to prevent evictions. It was an excellent job and [illegible] little items like this make excellent material for the paper. Even a report on the dispute on the endorsation of municipl cnadidates, what the local finally did and waht we had to say at the meetings. Hugh gave us a pretty good picture when he was in here

Will Don B. drop us a line of how the Hansard material is shaping up and just what the possibility of our receiving an article for the next issue appears to be. Of course there will be another two weeks of time before the dead line to work it over

comradely

Ross Dowson

November 30, 1949

Dear Murray-

Received your letter the other day. You had better stick them down a little better. It was open when I picked it up in the mail box and appears to have come open through not being properly sealed.

Havent had any word from Angus or Reg on the last couple of circular letters. So we will have to wait with the masthead proposals. I agree with your idea that we might, while we are at it, take off the official organ line. But not for the reasons that you suggest. I think it would be a good idea for security reasons. It is better to have me as an individual responsible for anything we might say in the paper than to have the party responsible. With this witch hunt on we might in some issue through oversight overstep the border line of sedition. Not that I think that the LPP and ourselves are liable to be banned in the next period but it is better that I as an individual be responsible than the party face any possible action.

I do not think that the question of entry has much bearing on the matter. First we are not going to be able to carry through an entry even if it were advisable for some time. The Vancouver comrades are opposed to an entry and there the field is by far the most ripe. On the basis of information that we have been able to gather there is very little opportunity for fruitful work in the Toronto and Windsor area... our other points of concentration. I do not know the situation in Montreal. And unfortunately we are not in a postion to carry on a profitable fraction work in the Toronto CCF what with the internal situation in the Toronto branch. While in my opinion the possibliity for a fruitful entry exists and if not immediately implementing such a tactic we should have that perspective, there is another and almost equally important factor to be considered. That is the condition of our own forces. There has to be a real party feeling, a cohesiveness, and will to work in the forces to make an entry. We do not have such a situation here in Toronto.

We have in Joe and the little group of personal followers around him a real anti-party element that has actually prevented us from carrying out even a profitable fraction work. Last week we had to withdraw a young comrade out of the CCYM because he felt he was unable to work in it, that it was demoralizing him. The truth was that through Joe's past actions this comrade has become disoriented. I think I told you about the debate we had on whether our CCF fraction comrades should attend our forums. Joe and Ken took the stand that they should not. Ken saying that we have to stay in the CCYM "at all costs"...that to attend a forum would mean our being cut out. The result is that Sonia who was struck off for this work and is a member of a CCYM group doesnt even open her mouth in the club even when remarkable opportunities present themselves. Ken, who is in part responsible for this, comes down to me last week complaining about Sonia's silence.

Joe still takes the stand that the CCF is the main enemy. If you take a pro-CCF stand he claims you are capitualting to Bay and Wall Street. If you attack stalinism he claims you are red baiting. You have to start from the ABC in every discussion with him. You have to clear the air of slanders the like of which our movement has never heard before. If it was just Joe you could pass over it all but it seriously infects the branch. He has around him a little clique of persons who are tied to him emotionally. Joyce, Sonia, Ken who is pretty much a political gossip, and an uneasy friend in this young comrade who we had to let drop out of the CCYM. These people are vocal, and I might say agressive to a vicious degree.

Take the question of the elections...Vernal against my advice raised the matter of the elections at a branch meeting on November 16th. I was stalling to hear from the N.C. but Vern is convinced we have to go in and so the decision has to be made at once so we can make preparations. I managed to hold off the vote so we had a preliminary discussion. Joe, Joyce, and Sonia came out against going into the elections. Why? Not for any reason you could guess. We have to have a convention. We cant go on without a convention and therefore the money has to be saved for this purpose. In the process of the discussion they try to make out when I said one does not exclude the other nor doing without one doesnt guaranttee the other, that I am opposed to the convention.

The following week when it came up for the decision after they had time to think it over and had met Hugh Jean and Marc who are all red-hot for the elections they carried the fight to an even more extreme degree. Ken, who was able to attend, openely accusses me of not wanting the convention.

Well, the point is that until the atmosphere is improved here somewhat there can be no talk of an entry. We cant talk about tactics in Toronto until we get rid of this idea that we disagree on fundamentals, principles. Sometimes going into an action clarifies in action the differences of ideas but I dont think entry can be carried out with this hope.

As for the elections. Well, the branch has decided and I suppose technically its up to the branch to make such a decison in so far as it does not imperil the national work of the party. I raised the matter in order to get the opinion of the N.C.. Jean tells me he favours going in. Other than he, you are the only person who has replied. I think that it is a national question in so far as finances are concerened. Well, the Toronto branch proposes to spend only two hundred dollars. That is the same as last year less the radio talks which in my mind does not mean cutting down the propoganda too much . Personally I do not agree with your arguments. They were all raised in the branch however. It doesnt pay off... well we have only picked up three new persons in the last year and everyone of them came directly from the campaign. Nearly all of our comrades are contact dead-ends. We havent a single contact around the party except old timers and last years election contacts. My experience has been that far from sharpening our relationship with the CCF that it had had entirely the opposite effect. CCFers vote for us and have the greatest respect for us. You should see the, yes, welcome I got when I distributed the paper at a meeting Winch spoke at a few months ago and when I distributed the paper at the AFL council meeting last night. Punshon, Waters, Archer, Leavens, Crocker and many others stopped to talk to me, very friendly. I suppose you know that Punshon asked us last year to help them scrutineer in their area. And all their scrutineers checked our vote and phoned it in. In last years campaign there was nothing big or new for us to campaign around. Then the CCF had just won the provincial seats and this year they have just lost the federal. I dont know what will happen to our vote. I think it will be about the same but there has been another year of capitalist crisis, the tito split confronting LPPers, the CCF going further to the right and the B.C. opposition. In some ways I think there are better opportunities for us to pick up CCF and LPP workers. Incidently there is nothing to work with in the CCF they are not puting up any candidates except a few aldermen and I gather few if any are running as CCFers.

On the UE. Thinking it over now and hearing your arguments I certainly would not have put the article in the paper, at any rate in the last issue. I think as you that the line is correct, however if there is any doubt that the time is not right it should not have appeared in the paper as it was not at all essential as we are not a force in the UE having to take a stand or give leadership. Unfortunately the only person I had a chance to discuss it with was Barry who of course has not yet had much experience along this line. Neither Joe, Ken, attend the editorial meetings any more. They claim to have no time. I raised the matter in the branch in a disucssion on the paper. We had about a half hour discussion on it with Joe taking the line that "we are calling for the expulsion of the UE"...the article is a capitualtion to the trade union bureucracy, to the red baiters, the war mongers." "its wrong in principle."

Apparently this disucssion was not enough and he swung the executive Ken and Joyce to ditch the planned eduactional on our British comrades work in the L.P. and devote last Wednesday's internal to this question. He put forward thecsame line. What a mechanistic mind he cant tell the difference between a tactic and a principle. Most of the comrades are only confused by such educationals. Bert happened to be down for the first time in some months and helped the situation out somewhat by posing the question more correctly. It ended up that Bert is of your opinion. Joe put up a motion that we oppose the expulsion of the UE. I tried to get him to present a motion to amend it so that it showed the difference that really exist. Vern in the chair ruled the motio out of order. The chair was challenged and Vern's ruling rejected. Of course in the vote I voted for the motion as did everyone else. Last night Joe came down to the editorial board. Vern was unable to attend so beside him there was only Barry and I. Joe insisted that we write and article calling the Morton group and the Carey union a dual union, that we commit ourselves to go battling to the death with the UE. He claimed that the Toronto branch by its motion decreed such an article. I tried to explain that it did no such thing to him. I told him that if a formal political decision had to be made, then on behalf of the N.C. I proposed that nothing further be said in the paper (this issue) on the question of the UE and if he wanted to carry the question further he should write up an article that we would distribute internall in the party. This of course did not satisfy him . He insists that the line of the article be contradicted in this issue. I do not know what he is going to do now about the question.

Obviously in view of the differences that have revealed themselves on this question I am not now talking of Joe's but yours and Bert's, it is unfortunate that the article was published. If I had dreamed that there would be such differences of course I would have held the article. Now of course Joe has another straw to beat out his bureaucracy charge with..."owson decides everything. It is really unfortunate that we have not yet been able to build a group leadership here. We are paying for our financial and organizational poverty, Bradley pulling out, Ruth leaving, Paddy dropping away. However Barry and Vern are developing very well. With the convention this year we should be able to partly strangle this bureaucracy charge by electing a P.C. of comrades resident here. However according to Joe these comrades and everyone else are not "free thinkers" but my stooges.

Hard to say how we are going to settle with Joe. Vern has agreed to continue on in the executive so we are now trying to carry a campaign which will force him to ease up on the monstrousness of his charges and innuendoes. Vern thinks we are making progress.

Looking forward to receiving your article for this issue. Will be tied up of course in the next month with the election so would you like to start on an article on the Catholic Church in Quebec and the labor movement for the January issue which we will be working on right after January first.

comradely

Ross.